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THE BOOKMAN

CRITICIZING THE CRITIC

By John S. Sumner

Secretary, The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice

HEYWOOD BROUN has been effervescing again on the subject of censorship—and "Jurgen". Poor old "Jurgen", which Maurice Hewlett has recently pilloried as a fake and a hodgepodge of counterfeit myth, is still an obsession with the author of H 3d.

What is a censor? When Heywood modestly referred to his journalistic career in France in the wonder days, and told the story of the young officer who had deleted the mention of pugilistic "claret" from a war story for home consumption because it was not permissible to mention wine or liquor in any story about the American army, we had hopes that he had at last learned the true meaning of censorship. When he told of the courteous Frenchman who held up the story mentioning General Pétain's "white mustache", there was cumulative basis for hope and we thought: here is real progress. Here is proof positive that the "Tribune's" serio-comic contributor will no longer brand us with that dread epithet of the Authors' League, "censor". But no, our hopes were vain, for on the same pages of THE BOOKMAN we read in clear print in the English language these disillusioning words: "Suppose the censor of 'Jurgen' had been someone other than Mr. Sumner." Curses! We cannot escape that hissing anathema.

And so we learn that "Jurgen" has been censored. The book, which we assumed had freely flowed from the facile pen of its author, had come in manuscript form to the publisher, had issued from the press and the bindery into the hands of the bookseller without official supervision—that book, we now learn, has been censored. How come? We know of no censorship of literature in this country. We know of no functionary having authority to review books prior to publication and to prohibit the publication of those

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which in his opinion should not be published. Of course, the postal authorities exercise a sort of limited censorship from time to time but only as to mailing—a prohibitive control after publication but prior to mail distribution. But when such action was taken regarding the New York "Call", that paper was sold on the news stands; so really it was not censorship, but merely the application of a ruling of the late lamented Postmaster-General.

Of course we know there are pseudo-censorships such as the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures (née Board of Censors), supported by interested parties as a sort of camouflage to give the impression to a bewildered public that some great national agency has exercised powers of review in the public interest over the output of the sex and crime paranoiacs of the screen. Can it be possible that there is some such reviewing body supported by the authors of which we have no knowledge?

In order to avoid criticizing the critic we should like to believe that such is the case; but no, in plain, unmistakable words he says: "Suppose the censor of 'Jurgen' had been someone other than Mr. Sumner". Here we have the measure of Mr. Broun as a publicist. He pretends to believe that the Secretary of The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice is a censor. By his writings he endeavors to plant that belief in the minds of the public. Why? *Censor* and *censorship* are words which are disliked by American people. The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice is disliked by Mr. Broun. Therefore Mr. Broun tries to tag the Society with the word *censor* and its activities with the word *censorship*.

Why does Mr. Broun dislike the Society? Because he believes "there ought to be a certain amount of what we now know as immoral writing". He says so in those words. Under the New York statute and under the federal statute "what we now know as immoral writing" is classed as "obscene, lewd, lascivious, indecent, filthy and disgusting". Mr. Broun thinks that there should be "a certain amount" of that writing. Of course, if "a certain amount" is permissible we can place no limit upon the output, for we cannot say to John Doe, "You may publish obscene writing", and to Richard Roe, "You must not publish obscene writing". And so, practically, Mr. Broun thinks that there should be no law making it an offense to publish obscene or lewd or filthy writing. We wonder whom Mr. Broun represents in making this plea for obscene literature —certainly a very minute and minor group. Of course we know of a few people who would support Mr. Broun on that platform, but we are very sure that Mr. Broun would give them the stony stare should they approach him.

Personally we have no grievance against real censors whom we have met. May we remark with all diffidence, as befits a non-combatant who was with the A. E. F. in France, that we too spent the entire year 1918 in that war-torn country. Frequently during that period, we wrote letters to the folks at home. As per regulations, we placed our name and designation on the unsealed envelope and left it to the tender mercies of the postal agencies and the censors. All of those letters reached their several destinations intact and without alteration. We did not seek to evade any rule nor to venture into doubtful realms. Many humorous stories have come out of the war period apropos of censors and no doubt there were instances of stupidity here as in every other de-

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partment, but we will guarantee that in ninety per cent of the cases of fault-finding, someone was trying to put something over.

So it is under the present laws. People who are charged with violations have invariably, either intentionally or through ignorance, been trying to put something across; and their literary friends in great numbers come to their relief and damn the agency that is enforcing the law, generally with little knowledge of the offensive matter and no knowledge of the agency.

For instance, does Mr. Broun know that the first knowledge of the existence of "Jurgen" came to The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice in the form of a letter from an eminent physician enclosing a clipping from Mr. Broun's own complacent "Tribune"? Does Mr. Broun know of a single one of the 183 other court proceedings in which the Society was engaged during the year 1920? Does he know that during the past year criminal prosecutions have been conducted by the federal authorities in fourteen cities throughout the country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast, against disseminators of prohibited matter, on evidence secured by the Society, resulting in the punishment of the offenders and the discontinuance of their degrading business? Does Mr. Broun know that three months ago obscene photographs found in the possession of high school girls were traced to an artist of international reputation, and a large quantity of such matter surrendered? Of course he doesn't know and he doesn't care.

Mr. Broun dislikes The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice because it is independent and impartial and because it is doing what every public agency should do—enforce the law which it is maintained to enforce regardless of wealth or standing. Mr. Broun would prosecute John Doe with his pushcart of smutty post cards, but he would close his eyes to the similar offense of the "respectable" publisher or the writer who has gained some notoriety through the complimentary comments of fellow writers practising reciprocity. He says so in so many words. He would debar the Society from action against such works as "Jurgen" but he would magnanimously "allow him" (Mr. Sumner) "to slosh around among the picture post cards". Such is the attitude of Mr. Broun and a few—very few—others. In his opinion a man or a woman who can produce a writing which some publisher will put on the market in a cloth cover and retail for about two dollars, should not be prosecuted for anything contained in that writing regardless of its nature or its probable effect. But the law makes no such distinction. It applies equally to the latest two dollar work of fiction and the two cent post card.

The Society is an agency to enforce that law where it is violated—not as a censor. That good judgment is used is indicated by the fact that in only 2.7 per cent of the cases involving published matter in 1920, was there an acquittal in the trial court. There was reversal in the case of one conviction by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, but even here the court was divided. The prevailing opinion, while holding that the book was not "obscene", said: "I can see no useful purpose in the publication of the book", and suggested that prosecution might have been brought under some other statute. The contention of the Society was upheld by a magis-

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trate, six judges of the trial court, one judge of the Appellate Division, the district attorney, and several members of his staff.

Any law should be impartially enforced. Non-enforcement or enforcement against a class breeds contempt for all law. Who would enforce these particular laws if not an agency maintained by the public for that particular purpose? Would Mr. Broun or his friends appear as complaining witnesses in connection with an offense, not against him in particular, but against society as a whole? Would he secure the necessary evidence, prepare a complaint, and appear in court from six to eight times? Of course he would not, and the ordinary citizen could not afford to do it. That is the reason why there is a proxy for the ordinary citizen which has functioned for almost fifty years. That is the reason why other organizations like the Committee of Fourteen have been organized to represent the citizen in certain cases where the man in the street could not give the time and attention to a condition which he knows needs correction.

A short time ago we read a story of a farmer who, encouraged by the price offered for frogs' legs, contracted to furnish the market with one thousand pairs within a stated time. At the end of a month his deliveries were very small and he sent a letter to the market to cancel the contract. He declared that he was unable to make good because the frogs were not so numerous as he had supposed; that he had, in fact, been "fooled by their hollering". Possibly some "farmers" are "fooled by the hollering" of Mr. Broun and others who decry the activities of an imaginary censor; but we doubt it.

A SONG TO A TREE

By Edwin Markham

GIVE me the dance of your boughs, O tree,
Whenever the wild wind blows;
And when the wind is gone, give me
Your beautiful repose.

How easily your greatness swings
To meet the changing hours;
I, too, would mount upon your wings,
And rest upon your powers.

I seek your grace, O mighty tree,
And shall seek, many a day,
Till I more worthily shall be
Your comrade on the way.

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CARL SANDBURG

By Paul Rosenfeld

With a Sketch by William Saphier

EVEN when his jaw hangs loose, when he shovels 'em under at Austerlitz, and goddamns kings and kaisers and czars, and guffaws oafish over having spied a man eating soup, we love Carl Sandburg. We love him because even the bleary quarter-formed verses, the many watery, tattered things that clutter the pages, for example, of "Smoke and Steel", make him to be perceived, in some strange fashion, a lover, a man who is "taking a chance" with life; and remind us, moreover, that out of the mouth that drools them there have pierced, man-shaped and tender, and will pierce again, some of the songs the most needful and gladdening to us here in America. It is creation indeed that Sandburg has been about in his earthfast, vivid pieces. He has been making us to be at home here in the west, and let down upon the soil the tents of our inwards. He has begun doing in his Chicago of the new century what Whitman was doing in the Manhattan of Civil War times: burning the mists off the befogged land, striving to create out of the inanimate steel and the loveless dirt, the living thing America. He has been daring Fafner in his den; feeling toward the cursed black tools of pioneer enterprises, the dreary objects amid which we dwell,—stripped stark hills and railway cuts and skyscrapers and canal boats and locomotive yards. Us they warn off the land, sinister outposts of the encamped enemy; fill us with malaise and restlessness. All that prevents our embracing the earth gathers about them and fortifies itself through them. We cannot circumvent these brutes. But Sandburg has been permitting them to come into him and fuse with him there. And we, because of that mingling, dare, in turn, approach them; because a man has experienced through them, their meaninglessness and inhumanity and ugliness has begun to break. The stuff poured into them by the poet has softened them. The here, the now, is nearer us.

Through him, as largely as through any living man, the map of the central states begins again to have some of the cloudy, mysterious poetry, the immanent romance, it had in the eighteen-twenties and thirties. The continental chart begins to show faintly colored spots. Names like Omaha and Medicine Hat and Kenosha, homely flat-ringing names, begin to sound a little softly, a little delicately, through him. It will not be alone the words Milano, Brescia, Vicenza, Verona, Padova, Venezia, that will, in the future, inscribe poems on railway trainsides. Sandburg has been feeling beauty in the towns of the middle border, where beauty never before was felt. The man respects indeed the rocks and rills and woods which Americans have always, dimly, wished to respect, not exploit; known they needed to, and yet never come quite to, respect. Names of raw, dun places start exquisite reverberations in his breast. The sense that a mystery is about to be unveiled on American soil has, ineluctably, re-

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turned to him again; he perceives, resting on the ravished countryside, the unearthly light of the future. And we follow him, see and feel where he has seen and felt. Through verses like

> Here the water went down, the icebergs slid with gravel, the gaps and the valleys hissed, and the black loam came, and the yellow sandy loam.
>
> Here between the sheds of the Rocky Mountains and the Appalachians, here now a morning star fixes a fire sign over the timber claims and cow pastures, the corn belt, the cotton belt, the cattle ranches....

we feel out roots in the soil, feel the bond mysteriously come to be between us and the American earth. They make us know we are glad to be here in the west; know that where white man has never yet fully lived, we can live ourselves out. Through the rifts stabbed, momentarily, by this man in the dreary fog, we, too, glimpse, faintly, dizzily, something that is nothing other than holy land.

It is profound physical adjustment to his raw Chicago, his sad America, that has made Sandburg creator indeed. No clever mentality proposed his task to him; he did not find it needful to challenge Fafner, to will his vision; he does not deem it necessary in the midst of a Chinese lyric to insist upon his love for his "democratic queen". He apprehends the western scene, not merely intellectually, but with his entire man. He has been "born on the prairie". The most of us are only foaled in America. We drift vaguely in the currents of air that circle the globe; strain away to some otherwhere. But for Sandburg, the magnetic pole of the spirit has situated itself in mid-America. He does not see, as do the most of us, the old world while standing upon the shores of the new. The sun strikes directly the Mississippi valley in his gaze. The Mississippi valley is always for him the space atop the globe; the globe does not roll it away and show him Sweden or Tahiti. Nor does he have to travel back to Europe in body to know his rootfastness. He knows it here; knows, in Chicago, that his centre has contacted earth, that he has felt the soil beneath him with his quick. Sandburg speaks in truth:

> The prairie sings to me in the forenoon, and I know in the night I rest easy in the prairie arms, on the prairie heart.

He is perfectly at home here: lies open to his environment. Whenever he goes through streets and up elevator shafts and over roads, he sees. Whatever he sees is part of the object present to him, part Carl Sandburg, and a vocabulary is born in him. Jumbled, harsh sites give him intense sensations:

> eaves of skyscrapers against a smoke moon—
> —chimneys shaking on the lumber shanties
> When the coal boats plow by on the river—
> The hunched shoulders of the grain elevators—
> The flame sprockets of the sheet steel mills;
>
> the iceman with his iron tongs gripping a clear cube in summer sunlight;
>
> smoke-stacks biting the skyline with stub teeth;
>
> curves of fire, the rough scarf women dancing,
> Dancing out of the flues and the smokestacks—
> flying hair of fire, flying feet upside down;
>
> Buckets and baskets of fire exploding and chortling, fire running wild out of the steady and fastened ovens;
>
> Sparks cracking a harr-harr-huff from a solar-plexus of rock-ribs of the earth taking a laugh for themselves;
>
> Ears and noses of fire, gibbering gorilla arms of fire, gold mud-pies, gold bird-wings, red-jackets riding purple mules, scarlet autocrats tumbling from the humps of camels, assassinated czars straddling vermilion balloons.

He hears; he hears the ground-bass, the breathing and sputtering of the cosmopolis, "all the crazy wonderful slamming roar of the street", "eleventh avenue racket", the roar of the "tall

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bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities". Sometimes it is the twisting of steel muscles, the groaning of metal and granite that he hears. Sometimes it is the timbres of human voices; the tone more than the word, the accents and rhythms of the speech chucked by "detectives, newsies, teameos, niggers", by the "Jew fishcrier on Maxwell street", the "caller calling in the railroad station", the "gigglers, God knows, gigglers daffy with life's razzle dazzle", men screaming "we'll get you yet, you sbxyzsch!" And the sheer noise, the banging of jazz, the colored and emphatic and cruel phrases, the raging and gorgeous slang of the American streets, saturate him, waken in him grim, rough, sardonic joy, touch life in him. When he sings, they pour forth again mixed with his own substance, with something harsh and rich and dark, with something that is perhaps his own bass voice, his Swedish iron, rendering his language doubly his own. Sometimes, as in "Aprons of Silence", we hear, echoed, the shattering senseless noise of the thoroughfares. Othertimes, most often, it is merely the gestures of the voices of men. Sandburg is a child of the twilit northern folk grim always with the knowledge of the immanence of corruption and decay, and the thought of death is with him always; and while, a few years ago, at the beginning of his career, he found himself saying:

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Under the harvest moon,
When the soft silver
Drips shimmering
over the garden nights,
Death, the gray mocker
Comes and whispers to you
As a beautiful friend
Who remembers,—

today, in his self-consciousness, we hear him speaking:

Death is stronger than all proud men and so death snips proud men on the nose, throws a pair of dice and says: Read 'em and weep,

Death sends a radiogram every day: When I want you I'll drop in—and then one day he comes with a master-key and lets himself in and says: We'll go now;

and, in another poem, crying:

I shall be eaten by gray creepers in a bunk-house
where no runners of the sun come and no dogs live.

What Synge did with the speech of the Gaelic peasantry, Sandburg is commencing to do with the American language. Woven into the substance of passionate expression, one begins to hear, sometimes raucous, sometimes still, the racy inflections of vulgar speech. There is a poem of Sandburg's that commences:

All I can give you is broken-face gargoyles,
It is too early to sing and dance at funerals,
Though I can whisper to you I am looking for an undertaker humming a lullaby and throwing his feet in a swift and mystic buck-and-wing, and now you see it and now you don't.

There is one that commences:

I cannot tell you now:
When the wind's drive and whirl
Blow me along no longer,
And the wind's a whisper at last—
Maybe I'll tell you then—
some other time;

and another that runs:

Listen a while, the moon is a lovely woman, a lonely woman, lost in a silver dress, lost in a circus rider's silver dress;

and one that ends with:

Galoots fat with too much, galoots lean with too little, galoot millions and millions, snousel and snicker on, plug your exhausts, hunt your snacks of fat and lean, grab off yours.

It is because he has the ability in him to find his way to folk that Sandburg has been opened to his patch of earth. We love the sites where we find fulfilment, and cleave to them. The light that has been drawn from us in intercourse bathes the world for us. And this lean, slouch-hatted, stogy-smoking newspaper man, this great iron cat, is no hard guy. This is one of the very gentle, the very tender. This is a man filled with a warm, great love for men and women, a warm, intense, almost animal desire not to be saved alone, not to go alone, but to go with other men and women, to be saved together with them or not at all. He has the sense of the unity of mankind; the oneness of the forgotten men of yesterday and the men of today. This is a man who loves, not sentimentally, self-intoxicatingly, the drab harried people of the Chicago loop, but out of a need of giving forth the human stuff welling free within him. Sandburg wants to sing for folk, to represent them, to make word forms to limn them, to give them something they want, to hook his arm through theirs. He speaks to them:

Finders in the dark, you Steve with a dinner bucket, you Steve clumping in the dusk on the sidewalks with an evening paper for the woman and kids, you Steve with your head wondering where we all end up—

Finders in the dark, Steve; I hook my arms in cinder sleeves; we go down the street together; it is all the same to us; you Steve and the rest of us end on the same stars; we all wear a hat in hell together, in hell or heaven.

He feels them so strongly that he feels them even in brick and steel and mortar. They speak to him out of the things made of the blood and their sweat, out of the food we eat, the roads we walk, the piles we inhabit. He knows, in a great grey sadness, the

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infinite pain that went into the making of the things we are, the ache of the bones of those who dug the earth through the æons, of those who shape today the things we use so nonchalantly.

A bar of steel—it is only
Smoke at the heart of it, smoke and the blood of a man,

he knows. But knows also that the strong blood of man laughs at the infinite pain and cost, shadow-dances

In the subway plugs and drums
In the slow hydraulic drills, in gumbo or gravel,
Under dynamo shafts, in the webs of armature spiders;

and that "roughneck singers a long way from home" have lifted, and again will "lift the birdmen into the blue". And always in him there is the hope of men:

It is early,
I shall yet be footloose.

There must be some powerful principle of life in the man, that he can make one feel so much. There must be some rocky strength, some magnetic iron in him, that compels, despite coatings of muck and dust, and draws iron to iron. For Sandburg is an almost rudimentary artist. His successful effects are almost sparks of fire out of a chaos, sudden tongues of flame that leap out of smoky matter and subside as suddenly again. He appears to be as nearly unconscious as an artist can be and still remain a creator; it is well-nigh in spite of his technique that he manages to communicate. It is spots of coruscating color, moments of incandescence, flashing lyrical starts, that he gives us, rather more than accomplished, rounded wholes. There is a plus one wants of him, continually, the plus of organization, of æsthetic form. Too often, one finds him tripping over treetops where he should have been walking sturdily on the ground. Because the poet has not contacted the profound underflow, the great æsthetic movement that floats everything on its relentless current, much in us is left unsatisfied, even in his most vivid songs. At moments, the basic rhythm is felt; then lost again, while the poem wanders blindly. Neither of his two lengthy poems, pieces, "Prairie" and "Smoke and Steel", has satisfactory organization. After the first few stanzas of the former, there is scarcely any progression. There is only accumulation; and for all the brilliance of the added matter, the movement begins to drag, to wave. Toward the conclusion, when progression is recommenced, the work is like a train of cars suddenly jerked out of sloth into speed by the engineer. "Smoke and Steel", too, is more a collection of short lyrics, than a whole. Many of them, the last two in particular, are superb in color and melody; but they are disconnected. It was the intention of the poet to compose a song of smoke, a hazy, drifting form, but it is only an irritating, unæsthetic drift that he gives. He was not in control of his matter. And even in his smaller pieces, Sandburg is not always artful. It is not only the loose-jawed pieces of the shovel-'em-under type that are fumbled. Some of the compositions that say most, have holes. For the handful which have a smooth and happy surface, "Broken-Face Gargoyles", "The Great Hunt", "Follies", "Loam", and the others, there are many handfuls that are rent and half-achieved. Sandburg will sometimes sustain himself in drawing the relentless line—as in "Death Snips Proud Men" and "Band Concert"—for three or four verses, then collapse ignominiously, and loose quite what he was on the point of fixing. Certain of his pieces, "Aprons of Silence", for ex-

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ample, seem merely the commencement, not the wholes, of poems. Others are mere whiffs, single lines, single phrases, set in the midst of much uninformed and unglinting matter. And then there are the many that are statements, not representations. The poet has remained entirely unconcerned; we overhear him telling himself what it is he ought to be singing. Most of the pieces termed "propaganda" by his critics are just such failures in incarnation.

It is the critical sense that Sandburg wants, wants badly. If he does see himself, he does not see himself sufficiently steadily, sufficiently calmly to master his own vision. If he hears, he does not hear quite intensely, quite sustainedly enough. There appears to be a sluggishness in his mind that makes it difficult for him to concentrate, to apply unflagging energy to his work, to learn to do himself justice. The energy to penetrate his subject completely, to squeeze his poems till they are firm and solid, is not forthcoming. He appears able only to command the force to throw poetic matter out in its raw state; when it comes to the process of refinement which distinguishes the artist, he is at a loss, passes on. He does not even seem to recognize where hammering and shaping is necessary; does not appear able to distinguish between something that he has fixed and something that has escaped him completely; does not know when he has completed and rounded a movement and when he has not. What one objects to, is not that Sandburg writes verse of the sort of "Soup". Every artist makes things as bad, or worse. What one does object to is his blindness to its imbecility. For one feels this weakness of the critical faculty marring his entire product; holding him back from where he must go.

Perhaps it is because of his situation in literature that Sandburg utters so much wind. He is a member of the group of newer American writers moved by the marvelous, the Whitmanic dream of creating America through literature. And formal weakness is often the characteristic of the art of those who pioneer, who leave tradition to go directly to the bourne of life for their substance. The music produced during the first decade of its activity by the nationalist Russian school of composers is but one of many other representative instances. None of Sandburg's group as yet manifests the sense of form, the taste for beautiful and distinguished shapes. One has but to recall, to be convinced of it, the evasions in "Poor White", the blurred outline of "Our America", the sudden balking and refusal to penetrate any more deeply into the subject's unconscious that occurs toward the middle of "The Ordeal of Mark Twain". But something besides their situation in literature causes the deficiency of these writers; in all of them circumstances have only served to reinforce individual weaknesses which would doubtless have been present even had no fuel been added them from without. It is probable that in the case of Carl Sandburg, for instance, some heavy slumberousness in his blood, something childish and inert left there by centuries of the peasant's dull, fierce, bitter labor, is much at fault. He appears afraid of himself; fearful of seeing himself naked. The hand of the herd rests, for all his radicalism, dangerously heavily on his neck. He accepts too much without examination, which makes him sentimentalize. He swallowed the war and goddamned the kaiser in approved style. Steich-

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en's lieutenant-colonelcy impressed him so forcibly that he felt it incumbent on himself to celebrate it in the dedication of "Smoke and Steel".

Besides, it seems probable that the experiences of life in America, for all their superficial quickening, have also reinforced his inertia. The life of journalism, the daily wastage of energy in useless and mean activity to which the conditions of our society have condemned him, has indubitably frayed him so rudely that profound concentration, profound penetration of his subject-matter, becomes exceedingly difficult for him. It may also be that certain of his instinctively formed associations have acted as further deterrent on him. He is identified with the proletarian movement; he is friend to many of the boldest and most vivid of the labor leaders, and has probably, quite unconsciously, been intimidated in his impulse by them. For these reformers, in so many elements the most humane of men, are nevertheless quite as scornful of the uses of art as are the owners of the big businesses; and, while giving him much that is vital, may also, in spite of his innate poethood, have made him a little regardless of the importance of the æsthetic attitude.

Without the aid of the critical faculty, Sandburg has achieved robustly. Without its aid, he has begun driving the floods from the submerged continent and letting steam the rising earth; has registered himself, in some manner, in his three volumes. One knows how much he has done when one reflects what a place this our America would be, had he not put in appearance, and left Masters our sullen laureate. Without its aid, his entire group has achieved much. There are poet-priests again in America. For the first time in years, it has been given the world to hear from the States the sound of voices singing beautifully, and to breathe the salty, pungent perfume of our soil. We have again to show literary forms that are both vital and "in physiognomy characteristic and western". Through the new American group, the literary life in America is evidently one of the great contemporary adventures. And yet, unless these workers succeed in augmenting their taste for beautiful and rounded forms, their work will remain half achieved only. Unless they learn to select, to criticize, they will go no further than they have already gone. It is the task of the men of our time to create accomplished artists in America, for the sake of America, for the sake of all the world. We know, that, can man succeed in creating art in America, in performing the creative function midmost this chaos, the tide of mindless materialism will turn, the current will set another way. But, so far, though the process has been initiated, in belles-lettres, by Sandburg and the others of his group, it has been merely initiated. The soil has been scratched, only, by their work. The deeper ploughings of mediums and of the American mind, the profound reformation of the great artist, the thing that Stieglitz has done with photography, has not been even begun.

It may never take place; at least, not in our hour. Ten years ago, it was almost universally believed that not for a century would the States produce an indigenous literature; today, out of the dry sand, a hundred healthy little chicks are hatching themselves; an American literature in the spirit of Whitman does exist. And yet, the pessimists of a decade ago may not have been as erratic as

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they appear. It may take years before matured literary artists can maintain themselves in American society. Sandburg, for instance, may never be able to produce his voice completely and give us the great body of song buried in him. We must be prepared for such a disappointment, it seems. And yet, it is indeed difficult to resign one's hope; to give over believing that the workers in letters will not perceive the crisis, and assume intensively the lives of literary artists. It is indeed difficult to give over hoping that Carl Sandburg will eventually, and before his freshness depart, learn to be his own critic, become what he prayed he might become, "the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars".

For he, and his comrades, have found, miraculously, the strength to achieve things in themselves wonderful. And the labor they must do, the labor of art they must accomplish in order to fulfil themselves and serve their kind, cannot be immeasurably more difficult than that which they have already performed. A strength, issuant none knows whence, has revealed itself in them. And the bourne cannot have been more than tapped.

JULY

By Stephen Vincent Benét

NOW that the air is spice and heat,
Now there are portly moons,
Oh, children, lift your chorus sweet
In the high, happy tunes!

Let all your fledging voices sing
Like thrushes in the corn
In praise of her, the fairyest thing
Since all good elves were born.

The cowslip and the cherry
Are Summer's bread and wine,
But she's more kind and merry,
But she's more salt and fine.

She's slender hands and pretty lips
And seafoam and rosemary,
Her ears are pointed at the tips
She stayed so long in Fairy.

Oh, "Love's a fool!" say all the wise,
"Young man, keep cool, keep cool!"
But while such honor's in her eyes
I'll be a perfect fool.

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THE BURLINGTONS

A Day in the Life of a Working Fictionist

By William McFee

THERE was no movement in the flat before nine o'clock, when the little servant, who slept in a sort of cupboard at the rear of the kitchenette, was roused by her alarm clock. After putting the kettle to boil on the gas range, she would dress herself in a sketchy fashion, and say her prayers. Then she made the tea and, pouring out three cups, carried two of them along the narrow passage to the Burlingtons, who were still in a state of suspended animation. Outside the front door, which opened upon the top landing of the building, she found the milk and the "Morning Post". Inside, scattered over the floor, was the morning mail. The newspaper and the letters she carried in to the Burlingtons, who were now sitting up in bed and drinking tea and conversing sleepily. Taking the empty cups and jerking the spring-blinds so that they flew up with the sound of a pistol shot, the little servant, who was called Thalia, retired to the kitchenette, where she drank her tea and began to turn over the problem of breakfast in her mind. Thalia was a pretty good servant, but she always seemed to approach the preparation of breakfast as though that particular morning was the Dawn of the World and she, herself, were Eve getting Adam his first meal.

Burlington once observed, as he sat at table behind the "Morning Post", that no one could accuse Thalia of plagiarism. He would also remark on occasion that Thalia led a life of thrilling adventure in her kitchenette, for she never knew what would happen next. And when Mrs. Burlington talked of sending Thalia home because she never seemed to learn, he reminded her good-humoredly that you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs. To which his wife added the good-humored rejoinder that she would be satisfied if Thalia could make an omelet without breaking several plates. The point about this is that they were all good-humored. Nothing was ever in its place, or done to time, or finished off as an efficient housekeeper would do it, but they were very good-humored. Thalia played up to them in this respect. She was fairly well satisfied with her job. She got twelve shillings a week, Sunday evenings out and two evenings a week till seven; and they also paid her fare to her home down in Suffolk once a month. Except when the children came home from school she liked the place. She didn't like London. And she was fifteen years old.

While Thalia was meditating upon breakfast and softly washing some of last night's dinner ware which she had sidestepped owing to a story she wanted to read in bed, the Burlingtons were preparing for the day. Thalia was rather mystified about her employers. Neither of them went out to business. Both of them covered an in-

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credible number of sheets of paper with writing which Thalia could not decipher, she being very short-sighted and having had only a parish-school education. She knew in a vague way that this stuff was of value, for she distinctly heard Burlington say he got a hundred pounds for some of it. She told her father and mother that Mr. Burlington "had no profession", and everybody down at Six Mile Bottom concluded Thalia was "working for gentry".

This, however, was a mistake. The Burlingtons were not gentry. They were producers of fiction. Whether they considered it a profession I wouldn't like to say. More probably they called it a trade. The day began as soon as the letters came in and were laid on the bed. Mrs. Burlington opened her mail rapidly and left the letters on the spread while she dressed. Her husband, having found his glasses amid the cigarette ash on the little table, opened the "Morning Post" and glanced at the news. By the time he had learned that Lloyd George had wrecked the nation, or saved the nation, whichever it might be, his mind had got to work for the day. This was the trick that deceived Thalia and a good many people much cleverer than Thalia. He read the vicious articles in the "Post", articles in which one could almost hear the writer's teeth snapping, opened his letters, one by one, got out of bed, bathed, shaved, and dressed—and all the time his mind was working methodically upon the day's work in the study across the hall. Putting on a dressing gown whose right sleeve was worn into holes by rubbing on the blotting pad, he went into the dining room and found his wife at her breakfast. She was engaged upon the same quest as Mr. Burlington. Just behind her was a small escritoire covered with penny exercise books. It was a habit of theirs to use penny exercise books instead of the tear-off pads usually affected by literary folk. They used about three of these books every day and bought them by the dozen at a little shop in the Marylebone Road. As a rule two exercise books would hold what they called "a number", which meant one instalment of the serials by which they earned their living.

But first of all the mail merits a little attention. It was a typical Burlington mail. There was a letter from a friend—another writer—who had not had much luck of late, asking for a small loan. There was a bill for wine, another for a suit for the boy at school, another for telephone rent—all charge accounts. Then there was a letter informing Mr. Burlington that his account at the bank was overdrawn, a matter of three or four pounds. There was, to counterbalance this, a check for a hundred and fifty pounds from a syndicate, for a serial recently completed. All that remained was the prospectus of a cinema firm and a letter from an editor with his ideas for a new serial. The envelopes were left on the bed, and the whole correspondence, check included, was rammed into the pocket of Mr. Burlington's dressing gown while he ran the gauntlet of Thalia's breakfast and read the "Morning Post".

Mrs. Burlington's mail was smaller and less dramatic in its contrasts. There was a letter from her daughter, who was at college. There was a letter from her son, also at college. And there was a letter from her friend, Mabel Milligan, who edited a whole platoon of women's journals in Fleet Street and was at that time planning a new one on a novel idea. This letter suggested that Mrs. Burlington write a series of

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short, sharp throb-dramas based on the films then running at the picture houses in London. She would have to go and see Mabel about that.

By the time Thalia had carried away the breakfast things, and a cigarette had been smoked, it was eleven o'clock. Time to start. Mrs. Burlington enjoyed a few minutes' conversation with Thalia, looked into the ice chest, put a shilling into the gas metre and another shilling into the electric-light metre, and assisted in getting the fires going. Then she sat down before her little escritoire and bit the end of her penholder for a long time.

Burlington had retired to the other front room, which was his study. He was a man of fifty and strongly resembled a well-known bishop. He had taken a classical degree at Oxford and had been in Fleet Street for twenty-five years. He still thought of himself as being in Fleet Street. About once a week he would put on his old frock coat and silk hat, and take the 'bus from the door to Holborn, and walk down Fetter Lane to the old familiar haunts. You might see him through the blue haze of the downstairs smoking room in a certain restaurant, rolling a cigarette, his hat on the back of his head, and enjoying a yarn with the men of his day who still foregathered there for the noon coffee and smoke. He glanced sideways at the sheets of manuscript scattered on his desk. Plenty of time for that. He was well on with it and the story was marching in quite his old form. Strange how difficult it was sometimes to make a story march; must be growing old. He smiled as he thought of the years of creative effort and the reputation he had achieved as a resourceful feuilletonist. Nobody would believe him when he said he was "stuck". And yet to himself he seemed to be stuck more often than not. And when he wasn't stuck, and the story marched, he felt lazy and didn't work!

There was this thing he was doing now, "The Air Spy", the latest exploit of his famous character, Darrell Droom the Detective. It was going with a rush, sending up the circulation of the "North British Advertiser" weekly edition in a most gratifying way. He was getting four pounds a thousand for it, with a steady contract for seven thousand words a week. That was a mere thousand a day, and yet he was six thousand behind. Never mind, he'd work late tonight!

Four pounds a thousand was unusual pay for serials of this nature. Yet Burlington commanded it because he had originated a system which cut both ways. He had an agreement with the syndicate which could be terminated in their favor at any moment. If they wished to finish off the serial to make room for a scoop or some other matter, Burlington undertook to supply a special concluding chapter and call the deal off. In return for these special terms they paid him a pound a thousand extra for the work. But they never did call the deal off! They spent good money telegraphing to him to send more. He would stuff the wire into his dressing gown pocket and mutter "Let 'em wait", and finish the chapter of Benedetto Croce's "Æsthetic" which he was reading.

Some years ago, when he was doing his best work in this line, he used to run three serials at the same time, spending a couple of days a week on each of them. Famous days! A million and a half words a year. And he smiled again as he recalled the time a syndicate wired for another two thousand words to finish a number because an advertisement contract had fallen

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through. And he had to wire them to tell him where he had left off, because he had forgotten what the story was about. Famous days!

And yet the public had never heard his name. That was a sore point with him, be it noted. When his good-humor permitted him to reflect adversely upon his destiny, he was inclined to feel aggrieved that the public had never heard his name. For he had had ambitions. Still had them in fact. Once or twice he had written a short story and sold it to a magazine. And they had been good! He recalled them now. Could he do that sort of thing any more? He rolled and lit another cigarette. Possibly not. Essays were what he really wanted to do. He got so sick of this eternal fiction. A small volume of essays that would live. And he went on recalling the beginnings of his career. He remembered when he was editor of a small weekly journal and lived in a tiny semi-detached house out at Shepherds Bush. Soon after they were married he began to spend the evenings writing stories. It seemed inconceivable now, but he had worked for nine solid months and never got one single acceptance. All returned. And he was reminded of an evening when Nellie had wanted to be taken out to dinner and a theatre, and he had said he wanted to finish a story. What was it she had said? *"What's the use? You never sell them."* Well it was true. And it certainly looked as if he never would sell them. Still, it took him a long while to forget that tearful retort. He had never reminded her of it, not even when she too began to fill up exercise books and to get slabs of typescript back from editors with devastating regularity. But how quickly she had caught on to the tricks of the trade! More than once he had gone away for a week-end's fishing with a friend and left her to finish a number, just telling her how the thing went and the number of words. And she had done it, finishing up with a bang, the clever girl!

All the same he still cherished the hope of writing something signed, something that would get reviews, a slim volume of imperishable prose. He compared himself to a traveler, a pilgrim in a desert of serials. The immediate was always the difficult. It always seemed to him that he was in a thorny thicket, that if he could only get clear of this little bit in front of him and reach the level ground ahead, he would be all right. And there was that mirage shimmering on the horizon, the mirage of a slim volume of imperishable prose, with reviews. But would it be slim! He had got so deeply into the habit of developing a theme to the uttermost limits that he was afraid of his own pen. And his style —would it be possible to carve a cameo with the nicked and inaccurate tools he had been working with so long? He remembered a saying of one of his early editors: "You must paint park railings before you can paint Royal Academy pictures, my boy." He himself had passed it on to a young writer he knew, a young writer now known as "rising". And what had been that young sprig's reply? Burlington winced now when he recalled it. The young man had said it might be true. Probably *was* true, to judge by the pictures accepted by the Royal Academy. But he did not want to do either park railings or Academy pictures. A revolutionary! And he had stuck to his own ideas, breaking editors' rules and so on, taking no advice, and now he had a real name, with reviews and mention in articles as one of the younger school. Only the other day he had written to Burlington from

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a foreign hotel, "Why don't you quit that horrible stuff and write a real book?" Well, could he? Now? h—m! Who was to provide those two affectionate and rapacious children with food and clothes and education? It was a speculation, writing a book. A *succès d'estime* for a slim volume of imperishable prose did not cash in for much at the stores....

Another saying of his early editor came to him as he stood by his fire and rolled cigarette after cigarette. Always condense, this Aristarchus of Fleet Street had counseled him. Write your story, if possible, on a sheet of note paper. Condense it so you can get it on a postal. Condense it again and write it on a telegraph form. Condense! The fool! Why, in practical authorship one was pestered to do the very opposite. One had to spin out a good idea until it was so thin one couldn't recognize it. But the man who advised this had never written anything himself. He was a sort of impressario—a publisher who waited until a man had made a name for himself and then worked him deftly to a boom, collating personal anecdote stuff, uniform editions, film rights, and foreign translations. Clever fellow, but he knew nothing of authorship. Well, he must get on with his work....

Just as he sat down the telephone rang. It was the editor who had written him about a new serial. What did he propose? Burlington hastily emptied out his pocket and, picking up the letter from his caller, studied the plan. Pinned to the letter was a sketch in pen and ink of a creature midway between a hunchback and an orang-outang. What they wanted was a detective serial bringing in a character like this one in the sketch. Could he do it?...Well, how would the first number go? Burlington said, "Hold the line", and studied the sketch for a moment. Then he spoke something like this:

"Are you there! There's a young chap who's lost his job in a bank, mysteriously and through no fault of his own. He's down and out. Can't get a job. Starving and desperate. He meets this queer character, half gipsy, half Spanish, in the Whitechapel Road and confides his desperate state to him. The dwarf invites him to supper, brings him into a vault near the river, and after a meal suddenly asks him if he is willing to earn a thousand pounds that night. Young chap asks the conditions. The dwarf tells him all he has to do is to marry a beautiful girl who is imprisoned in the house above. The ceremony is to take place on the spot and the money paid over. He accepts, and the girl enters. Continued in our next. Will that do?"

"Splendid, old man! When can we have it? We go to press Tuesday and the Colonial edition has to leave by Thursday's mail."

"That's all right. Usual rates?"

"Yes, three pounds a thousand. We shall want about twenty numbers."

"All right. Goodby."

Burlington picked up his correspondence, smoothed the check for a hundred and fifty pounds and laid it on the bookcase, then went back to his desk. This time he took up his pen, put it down to roll and light a fresh cigarette, took it up again and began to write. His wife found him still at it a couple of hours later when she came to call him for lunch.

"Stuck, dear?" she asked, as he sat sideways in his chair at the table, his napkin on one knee, and puffed slowly. It was his custom to smoke through a meal.

"Not very serious," he assured her. "Only I've got Darrell Droom and the

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criminal both living in the same house, and I can't get either of them out without spilling the next number. Come right presently. Claret, dear? How are you getting on?"

"Rotten. I've been stuck since one o'clock. I'm doing that thing for Mabel, 'Lady Parrington's Maid'."

"What's the number?"

"Why, you see, Gladys Trevor, the heroine, finds her husband in Lady Parrington's arms. That's the end of the number. I don't see how to work it out."

"Where's your difficulty?" asked Burlington. "There's—let me see... hm. There's a dance in Cumberland Gate, eh? And her husband, Sir Charles Parrington, who's been to France, or if you like to Egypt, where he contracted the hashish drug habit and was wounded in the head followed by sunstroke, comes back on sudden leave and finds his wife with young Trevor. By the way, Trevor is a bad name—worked to death, nearly as bad as Trefusis and Sonia. Well, he sees them in the conservatory, draws his service revolver and shoots them, or him, if you like. Arrest. Sensational trial followed by acquittal on medical grounds. Dies. His chum, a major, who receives his last words, meets Gladys as he leaves the house. Falls in love. Next number. That'll let you finish with a punch, and you can bring in that case everybody's talking about just now. How about it?"

"Ripping! I'll do it after I've been in to see Mabel. She wants me to vamp up some short things from films." Burlington laughed good-humoredly.

"I wonder how long it will be before they tumble to that and protect their films by literary copyrights," he murmured, and he drank a glass of claret.

Mrs. Burlington did not preoccupy herself with questions like that. Thalia came in with her pudding.

"Well Thalia, what is it this time? A new edition? You *are* smart! What is it? A depth-charge?"

"No'm. It's a roly-poly poodin', ma'am," buzzed Thalia resentfully. She always addressed her mistress when her master spoke to her. They regarded it with interest, smoking cigarettes the while.

"Well, could you get us some coffee, Thalia?" The small servant blinked behind her large lenticular lenses, and started suddenly as though the idea of coffee had at that moment burst upon an astonished world.

"Yes'm," said Thalia, and lolloped away into her diminutive fastness.

Mrs. Burlington dressed to go into the city. She dressed well. There was an air of careless magnificence about her. Everything was extremely good and fitted extremely well, but she always conveyed the impression that she gave very little thought to her clothes. Which was true. She was always in full cry after some excellent but unattainable ideal. It was this other-worldliness which gave her stories a subtle semi-religious intensity and made young women in lonely lodgings and tired mothers in dreary suburban streets pour out their hearts to the authoress known to them as Stella Dumaresque. She answered them in the correspondence columns of Mabel's papers.

Mabel Milligan was a woman of thirty-five, rather stout, with a peaches-and-cream complexion and a head of short reddish-gold hair that resembled a forest conflagration. She spent most of the day in a suite of offices in an enormous fireproof, germ-proof building devoted exclusively to the production of money-making peri-

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odicals. Mabel had started life as a stenographer in a provincial town and obtained her first job on a newspaper by sending in local items of religious interest to "The Ball and Cross", an evangelical weekly. She eventually became an editor of this paper and was pushing the circulation up into the fifty-thousand-a-week class when the proprietor of a chain of newspapers saw what she was doing. He offered her double what she was getting to put a little life into a journal he had bought and which remained obstinately moribund. Mabel got her chance. In six months the paper was a paying property and she had laid before the proprietor her plans for a new journal for women. He doubled her salary again and made her director of the woman's section. Mabel never wrote anything. She suggested. She had a bungalow on the South Coast, and came up by express every day; and in the bungalow lived her husband, who wrote free verse and plays about Vikings which had no sale.

She and Mrs. Burlington formed a very efficient team, for Mabel had the business acumen to market her friend's valuable temperament. Mabel could organize anything from a tea party to a nation-wide campaign in favor of sea voyages for slum cripples, but she had not the touch for answering the letters of the heartbroken. Mrs. Burlington came up and did that, one afternoon a week. Just now the idea was to run a series of short stories based on popular films but with a slant toward the things that interested women. Things like bonuses for babies, for instance, cheaper divorce, and women in politics. This needed a temperament in order to avoid hurting the feelings of the public with noisy propaganda. Mrs. Burlington never advocated anything. That was the secret of her success. She neither lectured nor preached. She sympathized, four thousand words a week, and the readers of Mabel's papers loved her. Her favorite author was Ralph Waldo Trine, and she had never been able to understand why her husband was silent when she spoke of that author's books.

All the afternoon, Burlington sat in his book-lined study and smoked cigarettes by the fire. Now and again he glanced at his desk, but he did not move except to reach for a book. Books! Books! A million and a half words a year and not a line of it between covers. He felt aggrieved as he turned over the pages of a volume of essays which was making a great noise at the time. He knew he could do better than this, he told himself. It was sheer fake; and yet the author was hailed as a second Lamb, a greater than Emerson, a compeer of Sainte-Beuve. Fake! He fluffed the leaves. The man had filched from Rochefoucauld, Diderot, Hölderlin, Croce, and William James in the most cunning way. Any well-read man without principle could do it. Fake! He threw it down and took up Dickens's "Uncommercial Traveler". Now this was the authentic stuff. Masterpieces! How often he had been inspired by these exquisite things, heartened by the mere consciousness of so much fine work in the world! Well, some day he would have a go at it. A new Uncommercial Traveler! It was worth doing. And bring in Fleet Street and modern suburban life. Yes!...William De Morgan started late....

Tea found him still idle. He wrote some letters and mailed the check to his bank. Wrote a check for a few pounds and sent it to the friend who had asked for a loan. Never get it back, probably. Never mind. Poor

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chap had not struck it well. Somehow had never got into his stride as a fictionist. Had a wife and several children, too. Burlington felt restless. Be able to work later. He often did his best work at night. When his wife came in, he said suddenly:

"I say, let's go and do a dinner and a show."

She looked at him and then smiled.

"Have you finished that number, dear?"

"Oh, damn the number, Nellie. Let's go out and be human for a few hours. Hurry up. I'll put on a clean shirt. Frascati's, eh? Tell Thalia to telephone the garage for a taxi."

It was after eleven when they got back. Burlington took off his dinner jacket, put on his old dressing gown, and stirred up the fire before sitting down to work. His wife brought in a cold supper with coffee and brandy and set it on a table at his elbow. Then he sat down in a deep chair and began to write. For a couple of hours there was no sound save the coal falling in the grate and the soft hiss of the pen running swiftly across the pages. And then the fictionist pushed his chair back, rose, stretched and yawned, poured out a glass of brandy and drank it off.

"How did you do it, dear? About Darrell Droom and the criminal in the same house, I mean."

"Left it in suspense," he replied. "Switched to the policeman's daughter who hears about the robbery in the munition factory where she's working on night shift. Only putting off trouble, though. Let's go to bed, old girl. I'm tired. Got a lot to do tomorrow."

Very soon the flat was in darkness. Presently a woman's voice remarked quietly:

"How would it do to have the criminal shot by an unknown hand through the window, dear? You could finish with a punch..." She stopped and listened. There was a faint snore.

She sighed.

And then there was silence.

The working day was over.

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Amy Lowell

I DEFY anyone to read all the poems in THE BOOKMAN, "The North American Review", "Harper's", "Scribner's", "The Century", "The Atlantic", "The Dial", "The New Republic", "The Nation", "Poetry", and "The Measure", for a single month, without being impressed by the fact that this early twentieth century has certainly found for itself an authentic voice. Many of the poems in these magazines are not good, but why should they be? It is ridiculous to suppose that a number of remarkable poems are ever likely to be first printed in the space of one month. The average is by no means low, even if the "time-spirit" does cause it to be a trifle monotonous.

I shall not begin by announcing, as

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my predecessors have done, that I do not consider myself to be speaking with the prestige of posterity. That must be, I think, self-evident; but I am willing to go so far as to say that my predilections are also my convictions. Criticism seems to me to be preference balanced by reason, and what is selection if not criticism?

The outstanding poem in the April magazines is, in my opinion, D. H. Lawrence's "The Apostolic Beasts" in "The Dial". "Saint Mark", "Saint Luke", and "Saint John" only are printed. I think, when I read the poem in manuscript, there was a "Saint Matthew", but of that I am not sure. Mr. Lawrence's work is on a vast scale, there is nothing puny about him, he either succeeds magnificently, or he fails with equal grandeur. His novels have usually come nearer to the completeness of success than his poems. "The Apostolic Beasts" is not a great poem, but it is a great attempt. There is an immensity in it which marks its author as a genius, even if a genius doomed to a half realization. Without a particle of his manner, without anything of his point of view, yet "The Apostolic Beasts" has something of Blake about it. It is a difficult poem, so were Blake's; it is a profoundly serious poem. It is not for the frivolous or the unseeing, such persons could scarcely understand an irony which is pathos, a pleasantry which is pain. Mr. Lawrence is tortured by the misery of the world, and haunted by the failure of the old religions. He demands a new Heaven and a new earth, and abides their coming without hope. The poem is, unhappily, too long for quotation, and too closely knit to be given in excerpts, therefore it cannot head my page of reprinted poems as it should do, but I believe that a new volume of Mr. Lawrence's poetry is shortly to appear in which it may be found.

At an absolutely opposite pole, more perfect as achievement, less striking as potentiality, is Mr. Frost's "A Hillside Thaw" in "The New Republic". Mr. Frost's work divides itself roughly into two distinct groups. There are the poems of humanity, in which character is juxtaposed to character or to environment; and there are the nature poems. "A Hillside Thaw" belongs in the latter section, and is one of the most beautiful of this kind of poem which Mr. Frost has done. "The Census Taker", in the same number of the paper, belongs to the first group; it is interesting, but does not rank with some of the poet's earlier poems in this genre. Also in "The New Republic", are Mr. Sandburg's "The Dinosaur Bones" and "Unintentional Paint". The ephemeral confronted with eternity is a perennial theme, Mr. Sandburg treats it with firm originality. The man loves beauty. He has an eye that sees through the actual fact to the soul within it. The maroon and yellow paint on the banana store is sun and loveliness where it is. Only Mr. Sandburg notes these things, they are what he is here to point out.

There is a very pleasant little poem by Ellen Janson, in "The Measure" (which, by the way, seems a most encouraging venture), called "Shadowy —Under My Window". It is a nice idea, neatly handled, and with a good deal of feeling.

These four, and Mr. Lawrence's

EDITOR'S NOTE.—*Each month* THE BOOKMAN *will select a group of poems from the American periodicals. These will be submitted to a prominent poet or critic who will choose from them "The Poems of the Month", though he will be free to add any others he may prefer. Amy Lowell will act as arbiter for August. The complete list of poems selected will be found in the Gossip Shop.*

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poem, are all I find particularly interesting. There are others, which may be ranked as pretty good attempts; and Mr. Robinson has one of his tart, astringent vignettes in "The Dial". I do not especially mention it because its type of theme, and its adequacy of expression, are becoming almost stereotyped with this poet. His finest work is not done so easily, and he has spoiled us to the point of demanding his best. Also, I fear, we weary a little at a reiterated gesture.

A HILLSIDE THAW

To think to know the country and not know
The hillside on the day the sun lets go
Ten million silver lizards out of snow.
As often as I've seen it done before
I can't pretend to tell the way it's done.
It looks as if some magic of the sun
Lifted the rug that bred them on the floor
And the light breaking on them made them run.
But if I thought to stop the wet stampede,
And caught one silver lizard by the tail,
And put my foot on one without avail,
And threw myself wet-elbowed and wet-kneed
In front of twenty others' wriggling speed,—
In the confusion of them all aglitter
And birds that joined in the excited fun
By doubling and redoubling song and twitter,
I have no doubt I'd end by holding none.
It takes the moon for this. The sun's a wizard
By all I tell; but so's the moon a witch.
From the high west she makes a gentle cast
And suddenly without a jerk or twitch
She has her spell on every single lizard.
I fancied when I looked at eight o'clock
The swarm still ran and scuttled just as fast.
The moon was waiting for her chill effect.
I looked at ten: the swarm was turned to rock
In every life-like posture of the swarm,
Transfixed on mountain slopes almost erect.
Across each other and side by side they lay.
The spell that so could hold them as they were
Was wrought through trees without a breath
of storm
To make a leaf, if there had been one, stir.
It was the moon's. She held them until day,
One lizard at the end of every ray.
The thought of my attempting such a stay!

Robert Frost
—*The New Republic*

THE DINOSAUR BONES

The dinosaur bones are dusted every day.
The cards tell how old we guess the dinosaur
bones are.
Here a head was seven feet long, horns with a
hell of a ram,
Humping the humps of the Montana mountains.
The respectable school children
Chatter at the heels of their teacher who explains.
The tourists and wonder hunters come with
their parasols
And catalogues and arrangements to do the
museum
In an hour or two hours.
The dinosaur bones
are dusted
every day.

Carl Sandburg
—*The New Republic*

UNINTENTIONAL PAINT

The flat gray banana store front
is visited by a union painter with no intentions
and a bucket of high maroon paint
and a pot of high yellow.

The high maroon banana store front
sings its contralto with two stripes
of yellow soprano on the door.

The union painter meant nothing
and we can not attribute intentions
to a bucket of maroon nor a pot of yellow.

The door and the lintels sing.
Two banjos strum on the threshold.
Two people hum a snatch of song
They know well from singing together often.
I must come this way often
and not only for bananas.

Carl Sandburg
—*The New Republic*

"SHADOWY—UNDER MY WINDOW"

Shadowy—under my window—
Your low reed sobs
Its desert love-song to the remembering stars.
Shadowy—
All the night my breasts are lilies,
My lips are passion-flowers.

At dawn
I remember how gray sands have heaped
Upon your grave,
Wind-blown—these thousand years.

Ellen Janson
—*The Measure*

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BROADWAY, OUR LITERARY SIGNPOST

By Kenneth Andrews

With Sketches by the Author

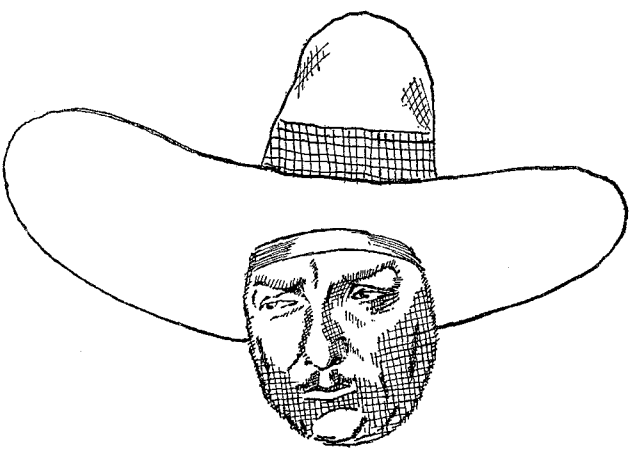
WHY is it", asks St. John Ervine, "that this great, eager, inquiring country is not producing great or meritable writers at the rate at which European countries are producing them?

"Is American literature at the end of a period or at the beginning of one?

"Are the majority of books that are published in the United States the result of an influence that is passing or of one that is developing?

"In short is American literature derivative or original?"

We haven't the slightest intention of trying to answer Mr. Ervine. If we did so we should probably wring our hands as forlornly as the Americans whose "extraordinary contempt for American writing" shocked him and first prompted him to put his questions. Still if we had been an English playwright seeking indications of what our literature "is and is to be" we would have looked more to the stage than to the novel to find them. For it is on the stage that the crude materials that go into our literature are first tried out; and crude materials are about all we have to work with now. Whatever our literature is to be it will not bear much resemblance to what it is or has been, because American literature is neither at the end of a period nor at the beginning of one but in the No Man's Land that lies between.



HOLBROOK BLINN

As Pancho Lopez in "The Bad Man" he has labored industriously all winter clearing up the prevalent misunderstanding of Mexico. And also he has cleared up any misunderstandings there may have been about his ability as an actor.

Somewhere in the midst of the third or fourth or fifth Liberty Loan drive we blundered out of a "period". No nation could pass through the emotional hysteria we passed through for

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four years and have its imaginative life unchanged. Ours least of all. War smote our imagination with the added impact of keen novelty. If it left us with little taste or little patience for the imaginative literature we had produced in the old days, it would not be surprising. Neither would it be surprising if out of this very welter of impatience, and fretfulness, and self-contempt, our literature that is to be should be brewed. We think it is being brewed out of them right now. New impulses, powerful new forces, are in ferment; though uncomprehended and as yet unassimilated they are bubbling away. But it is on the stage, more obviously at least than in the novel, that they are being sniffed at and tasted first.

For it is the stage that must always most sensitively detect the changing moods of thought of any country. We wonder if this isn't often lost sight of, yet in the very nature of things it is true. Plays feed upon the crop of prejudices and theories and 'isms and mental fads of their particular little moment. Served up on the stage they must minister, quite precisely, to the intellectual appetites of their moment —or they are thrown away. So much is thrown away every season. So much that is fresh and of the moment is taken on. And it is because plays must be so fastidiously sauced and spiced and flavored and trimmed to meet the tastes of their immediate time. They must be so saturated with what is current when they are first produced that they soon pall, soon pass out of date. But that is exactly the reason—that saturation with what is current—why they most clearly suggest the stuff our literature is to be made of.

What then of the season in the theatre that is closing now—if seasons ever close nowadays? Certainly things have been happening in the theatre this year. It has been—as might perhaps have been expected—the most significant year of our theatrical history. Forces heretofore unheard of in our theatre have been stirring. They are clearly definable. They have worked in definite ways. Standards — new, authentic, and *native* standards—have been taking shape; and as we look back over the season the plays which most strikingly embody them seem to fall into several groups.

One thinks first of "The First Year" by Frank Craven and "Miss Lulu Bett"[1] by Zona Gale. Plays of extremely simple design—as flimsy in structure as the lightest English light comedy that ever failed here. Plays entirely lacking in suspense or thrills or slapstick or any of the old surefire stuff. Plays whose sole appeal lies in their minute, faithful observation of Americans as they are before they become New Yorkers or Chicagoans or Californians. If you see either of these plays again notice where the big laughs come. Not on trick comedy lines, but on those places which deepen into even more penetrating naturalness, which startle because they are even more vividly everyday. "Miss Lulu Bett" can scarcely be said to have a plot any more than the last year or so of your life—if you are a small-town spinster—can be said to have had a plot. The plot of "The First Year" was adequately given to the world, before it was produced, by the apprehensive Mr. Golden: "Well a fellow marries a girl and—and—well, then they move to Joplin, Missouri." Yet both of these plotless plays have grown into big box office successes. "The First

[1]Published by D. Appleton and Co.

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Year" gets as many laughs and will make as much money as "Fair and Warmer" or "Baby Mine". Would that have been true three or four seasons ago? Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, ours being that neither of these plays would have been produced three or four seasons ago. But now we are, quite suddenly, enormously interested in ourselves and our ways; and these plays say something simply and truthfully about ourselves.

As you listen to the unhurried, desultory conversation of the Livingston family in "The First Year", you think of white picket fences and wide streets and shady trees and broad lawns. When the telephone bell rings Livingston, middle-aged and more or less gone to seed, stirs himself from the depths of the local paper.

LIVINGSTON. Eh?

MRS. LIVINGSTON *(over her knitting)*. That's three rings—Mrs. Parks's number.

LIVINGSTON. Oh.

(Silence for a time.)

What are we paying for eggs now?

MRS. LIVINGSTON. Fifty-eight.

LIVINGSTON. How much?

MRS. LIVINGSTON. Fifty-eight.

LIVINGSTON. Gosh, I remember when we could get them for eighteen.

And he subsides into the paper. She clicks on placidly with her knitting.

Grace, who is twenty and getting tired of the old town, doesn't quite know whether she wants to marry Dick Loring or Tommy Tucker. She thinks Dick is "more romantic and terribly good-looking"; her mother thinks he has always been "a wild, straying sort". Tommy is "dependable and obliging and nice". Both the boys drop in to see her, and out on the porch she quarrels with Dick because he insists on her eloping with him and tells her it will be her last chance at matrimony if she doesn't do it.

Alone with the diffident Tommy she makes it as easy as she can for him to propose. "Would you marry me, Tommy, I wonder," she asks, "if I said yes?" Eagerly, but awkwardly, he says he would. When he finds that she wants to go out into the big world somewhere he agrees to give up his business, the insurance business, and take her away. He suggests Joplin, Missouri because he knows a fellow out there who has a business for sale. Grace is touched by this sacrifice and loves him more than ever; so they kiss chastely, and are engaged.

In Joplin, toward the end of the first year of their married life, Grace is bustling about nervously preparing dinner for two strangers whom Tommy has invited. She is trying to implant in the mind of Hattie (the little negro girl she has pressed into service for the occasion) some of the rudiments of waiting on table. She gets some consommé cups from the sideboard and asks, "Now, Hattie, do you know what these are for?"

HATTIE. Coffee.

GRACE. No, not with two handles—these are for bouillon.

HATTIE. *What?*

GRACE. Soup! First, though, we'll have melon. Then we'll have roast chicken and two vegetables and coffee. The coffee you will serve after everything.

HATTIE. After everything! After the melon an' after the soup an' after—

GRACE. No, no. I mean when the dinner is over you will serve the coffee in these little cups. Hattie, are you sure you have waited on table before?

HATTIE. Yes'm, but I washes best though.

Just a picture of what happened in your house last week. When Tommy comes home he tries to help and gets in the way. He tells her he's sorry for her and starts to put his arm around her, but she pushes him aside with, "Don't, darling, there's plenty to do yet". Which little episode tells the commonplace, normal story of their first year.

The two people whom Tommy had

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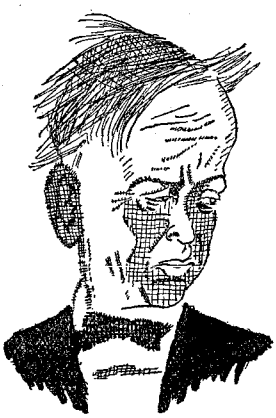
invited to dinner are the purchasing agent of the Joplin and Missouri railroad and his wife. Tommy has put everything he owns, including a Lib-



FRANK CRAVEN

Who is rounding out his first year as Tommy Tucker in "The First Year" by Frank Craven. As actor he was lucky to find such a play for a vehicle, and as playwright he picked just the right actor for his leading rôle.

erty Bond of Grace's, into buying options on some land which he thought the railroad would want for its new spur line. The deal is practically completed and the Tuckers have visions of sudden wealth when Dick Loring turns up. He also is with the railroad and, without realizing it, he spoils Tommy's sale by saying that the spur line is not to go anywhere near the land. It is a heartbreaker for Tommy and Grace: one of those tragedies that happen in little houses. Tommy, alone with Grace, tries to keep up his front.

TOMMY. Don't you worry about my not having money.

GRACE. But I do! I guess we'll always be just nothing, Tommy—always live in flats—I'll do my own cooking and make my own dresses, and you'll always wear clothes that don't fit and shirts that bulge in front.

TOMMY. Oh no I won't.

GRACE. Yes you will, Tommy! You're going to be one of those well-meaning, almost-get-there men and we'll have to put on a brave front to our friends and say, "We're doing very well," just as we had to say it to Dick tonight.

It is a poignant tragedy when an "almost-get-there" man realizes himself a failure in the eyes of the woman he loves. What a chance for fine writing—but there is none of it. After a moment or two Tommy's assurance wavers a bit. He sits wearily at the table and passes his hand over his eyes and says, "You don't think I'm any good at all. Do you, Grace?" That's all. He hurts her because he accuses her of having greeted Dick too effusively and she packs up her bag and puts on her hat and coat. And what in the old days would have been a "big scene" happens in this way:

TOMMY *(looking at her in astonishment)*. Where are you going?

GRACE. I'm going home!

TOMMY. You—why—don't be silly!

GRACE. I'm not silly! I can't stand it, Tommy. If I stay here any longer my nerves will just go like that, that's all. I'm going to get that ten o'clock train and go home.

TOMMY. You take those things off, because you're not going to do any such thing.

And when she makes for the door he doesn't roar or elocute but says pleadingly, as you would say, "Don't be silly now, Grace!"

She does leave; but they make it up later as most young married people do, and incidentally Tommy does sell his land. They had "just been suffering from matrimonial measles, troubles that look terrible, but don't amount to anything. Everybody has them."

Isn't that an entirely new subject for a Broadway success? Is it not an achievement to have written it? It seems to us that "The First Year" has contributed to the purely commercial theatre a new note—that, of its sort, it is the best play of many seasons.

Perhaps "Nice People" by Rachel Crothers belongs with "The First Year" and "Miss Lulu Bett" in that it also expresses this same new half exasperated introspection. Though a less worthy play than either of the others it does make a definite comment

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and pass a definite criticism on a phase of our life: the scandalous behavior of the debs and dubs of our front families.

May it not be that these plays mark the beginning (in the theatre of all places) of one prime requisite for any true literature: comprehending self-criticism? And if that is true could anything be more significant for the drama or for our literature?

It may be that this dawning consciousness of ourselves as a people, with customs and traditions of our own, is expressed a little more rudely and in a different mood in two other plays of the season, "Little Old New York" by Rida Johnson Young and "Not So Long Ago" by Arthur Richman. Until very recently—within the last two or three seasons—it was an axiom among producers that "costume plays" could not make money in this country. But "Not So Long Ago", slight and anæmic though it was, was moderately prosperous; and "Little Old New York" was one of the paying productions of the year. Both tell of the quaint little town that was New York a hundred years ago, when the institutions that make New York what she is today were having their humble beginnings. Legends cling about the men who dreamed of a vast city between the Bluff and the Sound. Why haven't they been put in plays before? Simply because we have not been interested in them before. This season, however, there was a curiously piquant pleasure for New York audiences in seeing Peter Delmonico peddling sandwiches from a basket; in hearing Cornelius Vanderbilt, a young ferryman, insist that steamboats were practicable and that sometime they would be running regularly between New York and Albany. That keen relish for our own past is something new. It is a most recently acquired taste in the theatre.

When the curtain goes up on "Little Old New York" it is a spring morning in the town of New York in 1810. A group of "young bloods" of the time are finishing a game of cards and a bowl of punch. The young bloods include Larry Delevan, Henry Brevoort, Washington Irving, and Fitz-Greene Halleck. Reilly, Delevan's servant, refuses to "mull them some more ale", because it's seven and after. He persuades them to wind up their game, telling them "there's towels on the horse trough, if you gentlemen would be liking to refresh your heads under the pump". Horse troughs and pumps in New York.

Cornelius Vanderbilt, a serious-minded young man with a big idea, drops in to talk over his steamboat project with Delevan. He is most respectful and apologizes for bothering him before breakfast.

DELEVAN. Not at all. But how'd you get up from the Battery so early?

VANDERBILT. I got a lift on the Boston coach, sir, to Maiden Lane and walked the rest.

DELEVAN. Holy Moses! Walked from Maiden Lane to Barclay Street and Broadway before seven. Your energy puts me to shame.

For Delevan's roomy old house, surrounded by its meadows, is at Barclay Street and Broadway!

Halleck, Brevoort, and Irving return, considerably perked up by the cold water, and Delevan introduces them:

DELEVAN. This is Mr. Washington Irving, Cornelius. He scribbles a bit. Awful stuff, but the public has a strange taste for it. And this disreputable person, Cornelius, is Mr. Fitz-Greene Halleck, secretary to John Jacob Astor in his leisure moments.

The mellow, reminiscent quality of these first few admirable scenes is unfortunately not sustained through the remainder of the play, and the story

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itself has no more to do with New York of 1810 than it has with New York of 1921. A nephew in Ireland who was to inherit the Delevan fortune has died; and his sister comes to America, dressed as a boy, and impersonates him. She is extremely sweet and cute and goes in for baby talk. When Delevan finds out she is a girl he falls in love with her, which makes everything all right.

The success of the play depended more on the Cinderella complex than on its atmosphere of Old Manhattan; but the important point is that the picture of those bygone celebrities in their shirt sleeves proved peculiarly captivating. "Abraham Lincoln" last year and "Romance" in its recent revival, may have benefited by this newly aroused curiosity about the America that is gone. And isn't this curiosity, this half timid groping for a *tradition*, another prime essential for any sound drama or literature?

Light comedy demands an atmosphere of intelligent sophistication if it is to flourish. We have been woefully bereft of any such atmosphere in the theatre heretofore. Most of the sensitive little plays of this type that have tried to make friends with the New York theatre public have curled up and died within a few weeks, broken-hearted and misunderstood. They have been thought either wicked or silly by a public which preferred its humor out of a seltzer bottle and its sentiment out of the mouths of baby ingénues. No American playwright, save Clare Kummer, has achieved any notable success in this delicate medium; and of her plays only "Good Gracious Annabelle" found any very general response. It has long been said that American playwrights were incapable of writing light comedy; but it is more likely that American audiences have been incapable of enjoying it. Has there been a change, or has there not? Perhaps not; but there is no harm in hoping that the success of "Enter Madame"[2] by Gilda Varesi and Dolly Byrne and of "Mr. Pim Passes By" by A. A. Milne may mean that there has been. "Enter Madame", that suave, sophisticated little play, rode to complete success purely on its virtues as a light comedy. It is joyous and sparkling from beginning to end; but it never verges on farce, there are no tricks in it, no cocktail scenes, no lingerie.

It tells the story of Lisa Della Robbia, prima donna, capricious, imperious, fascinating. It is her radiant nature that is the mainspring of the play; and that is true light comedy. She is devoted to her husband, but spends most of each year flitting about among the opera houses of Europe, leaving him to the life of married bachelorhood. When he rebels and writes her that he is in love with another woman and wants a divorce, she takes wing and flies across the sea from Barcelona to fight for her love.

Her husband accuses her of thoughtlessness and extravagance. Though deeply wounded, she is still the poseur.

LISA. I am Della Robbia. Love is my master and my slave. I am young as eternity, old as the moons, wise as the stars.

GERALD. Oh stop, Lisa! Stop acting! Now you listen to me. You're a conceited middle-aged woman, whose career is on the wane.... You've been spoiled and petted. Self has been your God and you have served him well.... You are growing old, Lisa, there's too much rouge here....too much trouble to gain your effects. You're growing old, Lisa, old I tell you, old!

LISA *(rises slowly, her face bathed in tears)*. Am I so very old, Gerald? Too old for you to love, too old to love you?

She is desperate and heartbroken and, surrounded by her maid and her

[2]Published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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CHARLES S. GILPIN

His portrayal of the ex-Pullman porter who became "The Emperor Jones"—and later just Jones—is the best argument you can give those who lament the passing of the palmy days and their great tragedians.

secretary and her cook and her doctor, she gives way as a prima donna should. But in the midst of her tantrum her maid shows her a new tea gown. Her face clears at once, and she forgets her tragedy in admiration of the gown.

Later she refuses steadily to see her husband, though he tries again and again to gain admittance. Then when the first decree of divorce is finally granted she looks at it wistfully and says, "He did not break down the door." She impulsively decides that she will make one final effort to win him back, and so gives a little last dinner in honor of her husband and the woman he is to marry. In this duel of wits Lisa easily wins. After the guests have gone she and Gerald agree that they don't want a divorce after all...and later Bice, the faithful old retainer who sees no evil and thinks no evil, takes two glasses of wine into Lisa's bedroom.

Next morning reporters storm the house, and Lisa hastily decides to accept a contract for a South American tour to avoid the scandal (she had promised Gerald to settle down on a farm and raise chickens). The steamer for Buenos Aires leaves in half an hour, but Lisa is happy. It is the way she does things.

LISA. Now we run out by the back door—here, Gerald, you hold Toto.

GERALD *(suddenly)*. No no, Lisa. I won't.

LISA. But Gerald!

GERALD. Now look here, darling, you're making me do all the things I swore I'd never do again. You're going off to sing—you drag me along, and you want me to carry that damn pup. I won't do it, I tell you. I won't.

LISA. But, Gerald, *Madonna mia!* We can't leave Toto.

GERALD. Very well then, you can leave me.

LISA. Oh, Gerald—Gerald—not again!

GERALD. Oh, give me the damn dog.

BICE. Exit Madame.

Such a play appeals to a maturer sense of humor than we have been accustomed to find on Broadway, but it lasted throughout the season. It may mean much or little—if it means that we have acquired the taste for slender, facile little plays like this, it does mean much.

Aren't we even overcoming our unwillingness to think in the theatre? Isn't there a public, growing larger every season, for plays before which we must think? Plays about unlovely people and sombre things, which mean

GILDA VARESI

She is the co-author, with Dolly Byrne, of the play in which she herself is the Madame who does the entering. And this fact is one of the principal reasons why Lisa Della Robbia wintered in our midst.

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nothing if we miss the thought and implication behind them. This season we have had Eugene G. O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones"[3] and "Diff'rent"[3]. Last season we had his "Beyond the Horizon"[3]. We have had St. John Ervine's "Mixed Marriage"[4] this year, and last year we had his "John Ferguson"[4] and "Jane Clegg"[5]. How long would any of these plays have lasted four or five seasons ago?

It seems to us, however, that the Theatre Guild's last production, "Liliom"[3] by Franz Molnar, reveals more clearly what we mean by a play before which one must think. Foreign in origin and mood and scene, its astonishing success indicates more forcibly that we do have a public for plays of genuine imagination—if they be good plays as well as good "studies". "Liliom" is a living transcript of the rude, crippled love story it pictures. Liliom himself is a barker at an amusement park; and he is a tough guy, a roughneck, a bad egg. Not malicious, just tough. He takes a fancy to Julie, a servant girl, who is as inarticulate as he. Their love scene on the park bench, full of giggles, long pauses, nervous whistling, and blank stares, was not a scene in a play at all. It was a roughneck making love to his sweetie.

Living together they are still inarticulate, still ashamed of the love they cannot express or understand. They have no money. Liliom has no work, he "never learned a trade". He is at heart a troubadour, a vagabond. He bullies Julie; she nags him fumblingly, urging him to get work. Once he strikes her, though he doesn't know just why. Why he did it puzzles him, even in heaven. He doesn't know he did it because he loved her and so "didn't like to see her cry".

When he finds out that he is to be a father something deep in him stirs and tries to wake. He is happy and proud, but only fitfully. Fatherhood does not redeem him, it merely makes him restless in the face of another emotion he cannot understand. But he does have, for once, a desire to do something for another—for his baby that is to be. So he and another roughneck, who is even rougher and harder, start out to rob the paymaster of a factory. This holdup is a fizzle, and Liliom, thinking of his baby and Julie, kills himself to escape capture.

In the Beyond—a celestial police court exactly like the one Liliom and his frowsy friend had imagined was awaiting them on the other side—Liliom is still Liliom. He cannot repent or regret, for such emotions were not in him and death did not put them there. After his purification by fire, fifteen years of it, he is sobered a bit and chastened; but he is still Liliom. The beginnings of kindliness, the first flickers of pity and remorse are there. No more. The play may have something to do with reincarnation, or recurrent earth lives, or something; but we doubt it. It seems to us an almost perfect story (we can't apply the word *study* to such a live warm thing as "Liliom") of a hard guy. This does not at all do the play justice. The story is told deftly and lightly, with a whimsical comprehension of the rugged characters; and the whole glows with a gorgeous humor.

When will an American author write just this kind of play? Sometime probably, but not soon. O'Neill himself would undoubtedly be the only playwright in America to think of handling such a theme. Indeed, he did handle a strikingly similar theme in "Beyond the Horizon". Compare that bitter, hopeless play with "Liliom".

[3]Published by Boni and Liveright.
[4]Published by the Macmillan Co.
[5]Published by Henry Holt and Co.

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Both picture constricted, darkened souls; both tell of the disintegration into squalor of a love story; both end in the death of the incompetent one who found life too hard. But oh, the difference! That comparison would be a tremendously interesting study: the blithe, sophisticated Hungarian and the dank New Englander working out the same theme. Both plays are published; if we were a professor of the drama we would give this assignment to our little ones.

But best of all there are indications in this remarkable season that we are not incapable of satire—with the healthy proviso that it be our own native kind of satire. We have always been regarded, in the theatre, as about the most sentimental people in the world. Satire's favorite sport is ripping open our cherished sentimental idols and showing the sawdust inside them. It applies common sense and reduces to the absurd prejudices which all nice people should take on faith. We haven't liked that in the theatre before. More than that, as good Americans, we have actively resented it. Yet this season we have had "The Bad Man"[6] by Porter Emerson Browne, "The Tavern" adapted from the Cora Dick Gantt play by George M. Cohan, and Bernard Shaw's "Heartbreak House".[7] Each has found a big public. Each has made money. Of course in the most successful of these, "The Bad Man", the satire is a bit wavering, a bit furtive, but even so it is far and away the most significant because it does something that hasn't been done in the theatre before. It raises a sceptical eyebrow and shrugs an irreverent shoulder at our own sacred 100 per cent Amurricanism.

[6]Novelized version by Charles Hanson Towne published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.
[7]Published by Brentano's.

"The Bad Man" is a skilful play. With what catlike tread Mr. Browne feels his way before he even lets the audience know that he is going to try something new. The first act is upright, honorable American melodrama. The mortgage on the old farm will not be foreclosed that night because Morgan Pell, the slick city feller, has produced the twenty thousand dollars necessary to take over the mortgage and secure an option on the land. He does this, the snake, because he thinks there is oil on it. Poor Gilbert Jones, honest and good-looking, has had to accept his terms or be thrown out into the burning desert sand. Jones, in the old days, had loved Pell's wife, Lucia. Though she is married now he loves her still; but honorably, honorably. Pell learns of this affection, and after securing the option demands that he be left to deal with his wife alone.

To poor Lucia's horror he accuses her of being a bad woman. His eye falls on a spur hanging on the wall and he says (through his teeth), "Horses don't always know who they belong to. So they are branded. There's no reason why women equally ignorant shouldn't be similarly treated!" He seizes her and forces her back across the table as she cries, "No, no! For God's sake!" No dust shaken from the old traditions so far, but right here a momentous event occcurs. It is an event no less momentous for the American drama than for the wronged woman in the room. *The Bad Man enters.*

He is the dreaded Mexican bandit, Pancho Lopez, the terror of the border, who kills his prisoners, takes the women he fancies to Mexico, steals cattle, robs banks. He sets up his court in poor Jones's adobe. (Let us say before anyone faints from suspense that he saves Lucia from her

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punishment.) He looks Lucia over and finds her fair, and when he learns that she "'ave been married wiz one man all her life", he sighs. "Tell me, Señora," he says, "'ave you never live in free country?"

LUCIA. A free country?
LOPEZ. Si, like Mexico, for instance.
LUCIA. Don't you call the United States a free country?
LOPEZ. The United—Bah! Ees mos' unfree country what is. Every man, every woman is slave—slave to law, slave to custom, slave to eversing. You get up such time; eat such time; every day you go to work such time; every night you go to bed such time; every week, Madre de Dios, you take a bath such time! An' you call it a free country! Ees only one free country. Ees one in which man do as he damn please. Like Mexico.

That is a new note in our theatre, my masters. But Lopez finds out that Gilbert Jones loves Lucia; and, by one of those happy accidents that are common on the Mexican border, Jones had once saved Lopez from death. So the Bad Man shrugs. "I shall miss her," he says. "However, what is one lady between friends?" He promises then, with an ominous look at Lucia's husband, to make it possible for Lucia and Jones to marry. He also learns that his friend Jones is to lose his ranch, and he finds out why. He nods. "In one little hour, my frand," he tells Jones, "your troubles go poof, an' you shall be 'appy man." He will bring about these blessings by following out his simple philosophy which is based "on sense not law", every tenet of which—his conception of the sanctity of other peoples' lives, and their property, and their wives—scandalizes our American traditions, wherein lies the real satire of the play.

By the end of the act, well inside his allotted hour, he has kept his promise. He has stolen twenty thousand dollars and given it to Jones so that he may keep his farm. He has shot Lucia's husband (or rather had him shot) so that Jones and Lucia can be 'appy. Wealth and life and love are theirs. *Bueno!*

An audience at the end of this second act was probably one of the funniest sights of the season—confused, baffled, inclined to be thrilled, inclined to be shocked, most inclined to laugh. Yet a man had just been shot before their eyes, and one doesn't laugh at that in the theatre. The wife of the murdered man would now marry her lover. That wasn't right, yet it seemed right and proper. Most confusing of all, it was funny. Long fed on Pollyanna and Cinderella fare, no wonder the audience choked. But they liked it,—ask the box office man.

And in the last act the audience thoroughly shares the mood of the play. When Pell comes to life again there are roars of glee as the Bad Man shoots him again and says, "Santa Maria! 'Ow many times must I kill you today anyhow? Now damn to 'ell maybe you stay dead for a while, eh?" In the end, after overcoming the conventional scruples of Jones and Lucia—which are orthodox scruples, yet seem merely pigheadedness on the Mexican border—Lopez says:

I mus' leave you to live and love. No you thank me. Ees I thank you for here in your peaceful home you have give me the mos' peaceful day I have spend in years. Ees happy day for you—ees happy day for her—ees happy day for me.

Si, Señor Lopez, and ees happy day for us. Let us pray that the Bad Man who snorts at our jingoism and prudery and right thinking and hustle and the rest of our little tin household gods, has entered our drama to stay!

Shaw's "Heartbreak House" was far more frankly and far more consistently satire, though it was not so pertinent, so far as the present lofty discussion is concerned, because they were British household gods that were knocked

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from their shrines, and also because Shaw is Shaw. "The Tavern" was one of the most delightful productions of the year, but the target for the flannel bricks in that case was the ods-bodkin school of drama, and the methods used were more like Billy Watson's than Oscar Wilde's. The solid success of these three plays, however, is really one of the most noteworthy features of the year. We are indeed outgrowing our adolescence if we can relish satire, and satire of the sort suggested in "The Bad Man" is another necessary ingredient for that national literature that may be brewing.

We wonder if it is significant that Brock Pemberton who produced both "Enter Madame" and "Miss Lulu Bett", and William Harris, Jr., who produced "The Bad Man", and the Theatre Guild who produced "Liliom", are all newcomers in the producing field. Does it mean that they have brought new values into the theatre? Perhaps. And John Golden who produced "The First Year", and George M. Cohan who produced "The Tavern", are astute showmen who know, possibly better than any two of the older managers, just what the public wants. Have they sensed a change? We think so.

Here then are five rich veins which we have tapped in the theatre this year, each one of which has produced a big Broadway money maker: the drama of faithful observation of ourselves, the drama of little old America of not so long ago, the drama of delicate texture and subtle appeal, the thoughtful drama of unlovely people and sombre things, and finally the drama that lays irreverent hands on our conventional idols. These rich—we might almost say newly discovered—veins are not going to lie unworked next year. We are going to delve more deeply into them, and as we do so we shall be giving more clearly defined shape to a drama even more distinctly our own. And also we shall be shaping in broad lines the American literature that is to be. Here is the raw material from which it will be molded. That is a theory we have and probably it is wrong, or only half true. But it will be the theme we shall try to develop on these pages in the course of our profound observations on the plays as they are produced one by one next season.

HAMMOCK READING

By Heywood Broun

ONCE upon a time our theory of summer reading was governed by the same formula which underlies the practice of rubbing a freezing man with snow. On hot days we picked out Indian tales of Kipling, particularly those of blistering nights in the plains when there was not a ripple of wind and all the English characters concerned played bridge badly and swore at one another. Such stories always made us feel content to stand the hot waves of New York without too much complaining. Now we find the system

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is losing its efficiency. It failed us dismally only yesterday when we tried to get our mind off the heat by reading Gilbert Frankau's eastern novel called "The Seeds of Enchantment". For the first page or so everything went well. We sighed with content as we came upon, "'Too hot for Socialism, old man. Give it a rest.'" And with increasing comfort we went on and read:

It was hot, stiflingly so. Outside, Singapore City steamed under an equatorial rain-drizzle: moisture—clammy, bloodthinning moisture—permeated the gloomy stucco-pillared tiffin room of the Hotel Europe. Even See-Sim the Cantonese "boy" whom the Honorable Dicky had managed to pick up at Penang, felt uncomfortably warm as he stood, yellow-faced and impassive, behind his master's chair.

"That's the stuff," we said to ourself and, beginning to feel a little chilly, we turned up our coat collar. But presently we were again acutely conscious of the heat. More than that, there was a distinctly parched sensation in our mouth. The day, we found, was not only hot but penetratingly dry. See-Sim was to blame, we decided when we began to analyze our emotions, for we found that he had been out of the room and had come back. "Returning with the ice, he slipped deft lumps into their glasses; poured out the whisky stengahs*" (we looked up the * and found the explanation "a small glass of whisky"); "fizzed aerated water brim high" —— and at this point we put down the book. "Here", we thought, "See-Sim would have been as careless as he pleased with the ice and saved his deftness for the whisky." There was no need of going on. The whole thing was too alien to our life to hold the attention on such a sweltering day. Moreover, we decided never again to attempt Kipling in warm weather. The questionable practices of See-Sim, the bootlegger, reminded us that those hot and bitter bridge games in the Kipling yarns were forever being interrupted by somebody dashing off a peg of something or other. Nothing is so heating to the blood in summer as fictional alcohol.

Still another school of summer reading has either dropped or graduated us. As a young man we used to find ease underneath a bough with a western novel. And it was an ease which heightened to enjoyment as soon as we came to such a passage as:

Resonant as the bay of a bloodhound, Marcus Huxelby's cry was multiplied by echoes and hurled back and forth between the walls of the crevice. Down in the icy tomb the passions of hell heated and controlled him. His lips pulled back over his strong, white teeth in a snarl that held the man he had risked himself to save silent from sudden fear. His eyes blazed fire. From his tongue dropped the spit of malevolence—yaps of hideous laughter and growls of hate.

Five years ago any such display of primitive he-ness would have bucked us up enough to go out and tackle somebody at tennis or to try a round of golf; but when we came across it yesterday in "Get Your Man—A Canadian Mounted Story" by Ethel and James Dorrance, we could not even find inspiration enough to accept an invitation for mixed doubles. We have come to a point where tales of virility, particularly those which involve long running fights across the desert with much shooting, affect us a good deal like humidity.

And, come to think of it, the summer psychology of the theatre is no more closely adapted to our needs. Producers of current musical shows designed for hot weather patronage take particular pains to drill their chorus girls to ceaseless activity. From the moment of the opening chorus in which they come in with niblicks and beat time upon the stage, there is never a moment of repose.

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They are always swinging something. It may be that there was a time when all this awakened in us some feeling of the invincible high spirits of youth which will not wilt even in those theatres which are "thirty degrees cooler than the streets". Now we watch in some distress and think, "My! My! but those girls are certainly working hard on such a hot night." And then sympathy begins to set in. Owing to open pores we sympathize very easily. On the ninth of July, 1920, we remember, we lost eleven pounds while watching an unusually spirited performance of the Ziegfeld Follies.

In reading detective stories we lose nothing but interest. The first chapter in which the murdered man is found in the library stabbed to the heart with a paper knife does intrigue us, as the saying goes. After all how can the mystery be explained? All the windows and doors were locked from the inside. By and by it is not so exciting because the detective is continually falling into traps or chasing clues obviously put in for no other reason that to throw the reader off the scent. Long ago we learned not to waste suspicion by considering for a moment any of the first twenty-one persons splashed by circumstantial evidence. Worst of all is the last chapter in which everything is explained. Here it will be found that as a matter of fact there was still another door, but that it was hidden behind a piece of tapestry. The author hadn't mentioned the tapestry at the beginning and none of the detectives had considered looking behind it. The murderer, naturally enough, was the escaped convict, but nothing was heard about him either until three pages before the end of the book. The author of the detective story might contend, we suppose, that if he gave all the facts in the beginning there would be no story. To that our immediate answer would be, "Well?"

Nor do we find a vacation enhanced greatly by the novel about football and other undergraduate activities at Yale or Princeton. Our heart has been broken so many times by seeing actual tigers pick up Harvard fumbles and race for touchdowns and, years ago, by watching battering and victorious marches by Yale line plungers, that we have no joy in seeing these events rehearsed again in fiction. Fictional football has always seemed to us a little short of good sportsmanship. The hero halfback is inevitably invincible. Yale or Princeton has only to require a touchdown for him to make it. These athletic contests in the novels are as rigidly fixed as if Eddie Cicotte and Joe Jackson had been called into consultation.

No, the hope of the man who wants to get away from the daily grind and worry of work and weather, lies in books of theology. Our present favorite is "The Menace of Immorality In Church and State" by John Roach Straton. Says Dr. Straton:

> Have you ever thought of what a good husky tidal wave would do to "little Old New York" as we call her? Have you ever imagined the Woolworth "sky-scraper" butting headlong into the Equitable Building, through such an earthquake as that which laid San Francisco's proud beauty in the dust? Have you ever imagined the Metropolitan Tower crashing over on Madison Square Garden some time, when there were tens of thousands of people in there at some worldly, godless celebration on the Lord's Day?

And then we begin to imagine and take heart as various petty concerns drop away before the larger worry. "It might be that the good doctor is right," we say to ourself; "and if by any chance it does happen before Sunday week we ought to have a good excuse to get out of that dinner engagement in New Rochelle."

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AN OUTLINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

By Donald Ogden Stewart

With Sketches by Herb Roth

CHAPTER II

MAIN STREET—PLYMOUTH, MASS.

In the Manner of Sinclair Lewis

1620.

Late autumn.

The sour liver-colored shores of America.

Breaking waves dashing too high on a stern and rockbound coast.

Woods tossing giant branches planlessly against a stormy sky.

Cape Cod Bay. Wet and full of codfish. The codfish, wet and full of bones.

Standing on the deck of the anchored "Mayflower", gazing reflectively at the shores of the new world, is Priscilla Kennicott.

A youthful bride on a ship full of pilgrims; a lily floating in a dish of prunes; a cloissoné vase in a cargo of oil cans.

Her husband joins her. Together they go forward to where their fellow pilgrims are preparing to embark in small boats.

Priscilla jumps into the bow of the first of these to shove off.

As the small craft bumps the shore, Priscilla rises joyously. She stretches her hands in ecstasy toward the new world. She leans forward against the breeze, her whole figure alive with the joy of expectant youth.

She leaps with an irrepressible "Yippee" from the boat to the shore.

She remains for an instant, a vibrant pagan, drunk with the joy of life; Pan poised for an unforgettable moment on Plymouth Rock.

The next minute her foot slips on the hard wet unyielding stone. She clutches desperately. She slides slowly back into the cold chill saltness of Cape Cod Bay.

She is pulled, dripping and ashamed, into the boat. She crouches there, shivering and hopeless. She hears someone whisper, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

A coarse mirthless chuckle.

The pilgrims disembark.

II

Plymouth.

A year later.

Night.

She lay sleepless on her bed.

She heard the outside door open; Kennicott returning from prayer meeting.

He sat down on the bed and began pulling off his boots. She knew that the left boot would stick. She knew exactly what he would say and how

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Priscilla Is Pulled, Dripping and Ashamed, into the Boat

long it would take him to get it off. She rolled over in bed, a tactical movement which left no blanket for her husband.

"You weren't at prayer meeting," he said.

"I had a headache," she lied. He expressed no sympathy.

"Miles Standish was telling me what you did today at the meeting of the Jolly Seventeen." He had got the boot off at last; he lay down beside her and pulled all the blankets off her onto himself.

"That was kind of Miles." She jerked at the covers but he held them tight. "What charming story did he tell this time?"

"Now look here, Prissie — Miles Standish isn't given to fabrication. He said you told the Jolly Seventeen that next Thanksgiving they ought to give a dance instead of an all-day prayer service."

"Well—anything else?" She gave a tremendous tug at the bedclothes and Kennicott was uncovered again.

"He said you suggested that they arrange a series of lectures on modern religions, and invite Quakers and other radicals to speak right here in Plymouth and tell us all about their beliefs. And not only that but he said you suggested sending a message to the Roman Catholic exiles from England, inviting them to make their home with us. You must have made quite a little speech."

"Well—this is the land of religious freedom, isn't it? That's what you came here for, didn't you?" She sat up to deliver this remark—a movement which enabled Kennicott to win back seven-eighths of the bed covering.

"Now look here Prissie—I'm not narrow like some of these pilgrims who came over with us. But I won't have my wife intimating that a Roman Catholic or a Quaker should be allowed to spread his heresies broadcast in this country. It's all right for you and me to know something about those things, but we must protect our children and those who have not had our advantages. The only way to meet this evil is to stamp it out, quick, before it can get a start. And it's just such so-called broadminded thinkers as you that encourage these heretics. You'll be criticizing the Bible next, I suppose."

Thus in early times did the pious Right Thinkers save the land from

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Hellfire and Damnation; thus the great-grandfathers of middle-western congressmen; thus the ancestors of platitudinous editorial writers, Sitters on Committees, and tin-horn prohibitionists.

Kennicott got up to cool his wrath and indignation with a drink of water. He stumbled over a chair, reached for the jug, took a drink, set the jug down, stumbled over the same chair, and crawled back into bed. His expedition cost him the loss of all bed covering; he gave up the fight.

"Aside from dragging my own private views over the coals of your righteousness, did you and your friends find anything equally pleasant and self-satisfying to discuss this evening?"

"Eh—what's that? Why, yes, we did. We decided to refuse permission for one of these traveling medicine shows to operate in Plymouth."

"Medicine shows?"

"Yes—you know—like a fair in England. This one claims to come from down south somewhere. 'Smart Set Medicine Show' it's called, run by a fellow named Mencken. Sells cheap whisky to the Indians—makes them crazy, they say. He's another one of your radical friends we don't want around."

"Yes, he might cut in on your own trading with the Indians."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, Prissie—hire a hall."

Silence. He began to snore.

She lay there, sleepless and open-eyed. The clock struck eleven.

"Why can't I get to sleep?"

("Did Will put the cat out?")

"I wonder what this medicine show is like?"

"What is the matter with these people?"

("Or is it me?")

She reached down, pulled the blankets from under her, spread them carefully over the sleeping Kennicott, patting them down affectionately.

The next day she learned what the medicine show was like. She also learned what was the matter with the pilgrims.

III

Morning.

A fog horn.

A fog horn blowing unceasingly.

At breakfast Kennicott pointed with his fork in the direction of the persistent sound.

"There's your Smart Set medicine show," he said glumly. "He doesn't seem to care much whether we give him a permit or not." Then, a minute later, "We'll have to let him stay. Won't do to have the Indians down on us. But I tell you this, Priscilla, I don't want you to go."

"But Will—"

"Prissie, please! I'm sorry I said what I did last night. I was tired. But don't you see, well, I can't just exactly explain—but this fog horn sort of scares me—I don't like it—"

He suddenly rose and put both hands on her shoulders. He looked into her eyes. He leaned over and kissed her on the forehead. He picked up his hat and was gone. It was five minutes before Priscilla noticed that his breakfast had been left untouched.

A fog horn, sounding unceasingly.

She listlessly put away the breakfast dishes. She tried to drown out the sound by singing hymns. She fell on her knees and tried to pray. She found her prayers keeping time to the rise and fall of the notes of that horn. She determined to go out in the air—to find her husband—to go to church, anywhere—as far as possible from the Smart Set medicine show.

So she went out the back door and ran as fast as she could toward the

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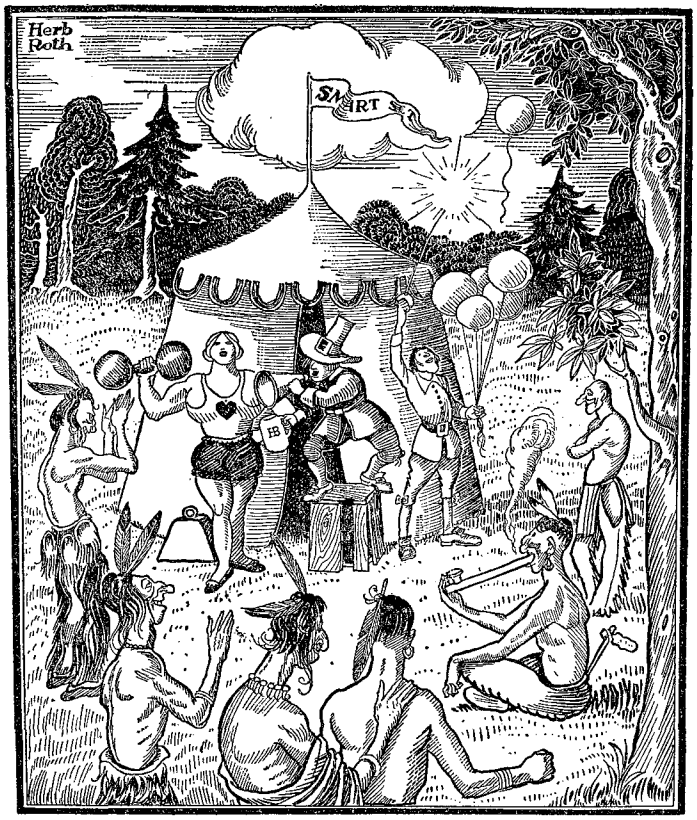
place from which came the sound of the fog horn.

He bellows, "Beauty — Beauty — Beauty!"



The Smart Set Medicine Show

IV

An open space on the edge of the forest.

In the centre of the clearing a small gaudily-painted tent.

Seated on the ground in a semicircle before the tent, some forty or fifty Indians.

Standing on a box before the entrance to the tent, a man of twenty-five or fifty.

In his left hand he holds a fog horn; in his right, a stein of beer.

He puts the horn to his lips and blows a heavy blast.

He takes a drink of beer.

He repeats this performance nine times.

He takes up some mud and deftly models the features of several well-known characters—statesmen, writers, critics. In many cases the resemblance is so slight that Priscilla can hardly recognize the character.

He picks up a heavy club and proceeds to beat each one of his modeled figures into a pulp.

The Indians applaud wildly.

He pays no attention to this applause.

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He clears his throat and begins to speak. Priscilla is so deafened by the roar of his voice that she cannot hear what he says. Apparently he is introducing somebody; somebody named George.

George steps out of the tent, but does not bow to the audience. In one hand he carries a fencing foil, well constructed, of European workmanship; in his other hand he holds a number of pretty toy balloons which he has made himself.

He smiles sarcastically, tosses the balloons into the air, and cleverly punctures them one by one with his rapier.

At each "pop" the announcer blows a loud blast on the fog horn.

When the last balloon has been punctured George retires without acknowledging the applause of the Indians.

The next act is announced as Helen of Troy in "Six Minutes of Beauty". Priscilla learns from the announcer that "this little lady is out of Irony by Theodore Dreiser".

"All ready, Helen—"

The "little lady" appears.

She is somewhat over six feet six in height and built like a boilermaker. She is dressed in pink tights.

"Six Minutes of Beauty" begins when Helen picks up three large iron cannon balls and juggles them. She tosses them in the air and catches them cleverly on the back of her neck.

The six minutes are brought to a successful conclusion when Helen, hanging head downward by one foot from a trapeze, balances a lighted lamp on the other foot and plays Beethoven's Fifth Symphony on the slide trombone.

The announcer then begins his lecture. Priscilla has by this time gotten used to the overpowering roar of his voice and she discovers that once this difficulty is overcome she is tremendously impressed by his words.

She becomes more and more attracted to the man. She listens, fascinated, as his lecture draws to a close and he offers his medicine for sale. She presses forward through the crowd of Indians surrounding the stand. She reaches the tent. She gives her coin and receives in return a bottle. She hides it in her cape and hurries home.

She slips in the back way; she pours some of the medicine into a glass; she drinks it.

V

A terrible overwhelming nausea. Vomiting, which lasts for agonizing minutes, leaving her helpless on the floor.

Then cessation.

Then light—blinding light.

VI

At 3:10 Priscilla drank the Mencken medicine; at 3:12 she was lying in agony on the floor; at 3:20 she opened her eyes; at 3:21 she walked out of her front door; and at 3:22 she discovered what was wrong with Plymouth and the pilgrims.

Main Street. Straight and narrow. A Puritan thoroughfare in a Puritan town.

The church. A centre of Puritan worship. The shrine of a narrow theology which persistently repressed beauty and joy and life.

The Miles Standish house. The house of a Puritan. A squat, unlovely symbol of repression. Beauty crushed by Morality.

Plymouth Rock. Hard, unyielding—like the Puritan moral code. A huge tombstone on the grave of Pan.

She fled home. She flung herself, sobbing, on the bed. She cried,

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The Meeting of the Jolly Seventeen

"They're all Puritans—that's what they are, Puritans!"

After a while she slept, her cheeks flushed, her heart beating unnaturally.

VII

Late that night.

She opened her eyes; she heard men's voices; she felt her heart still pounding within her at an alarming rate.

"And I told them then that it would come to no good end. Truly, the Lord does not countenance such joking."

She recognized the voices of Miles Standish and Elder Brewster.

"Well—what happened then?" This from Kennicott.

"Well, you see, Henry Haddock got some of this Mencken's medicine from one of the Indians. And he thought it would be a good joke to put it in the broth at the church supper this evening."

"Yes?"

"Well—he did it, the fool. And when the broth was served, hell on earth broke loose. Everyone started calling his neighbor a Puritan, and cursing him for having banished Beauty from the earth. The Lord knows what they meant by that; I don't. Old friends fought like wildcats, shrieking 'Puritan' at each other. Luckily it only got to one table—but there are ten raving lunatics in the lockup tonight.

"It's an awful thing. But thanks to

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the Lord, some good has come out of this evil: that medicine man, Mencken, was standing outside looking in at the rumpus, smiling to himself I guess. Well, somebody saw him and yelled, 'There's another of those damned Puritans!' and before he could get away five of them had jumped on him and beaten him to death. He deserved it, and it's a good joke on him that they killed him for being a Puritan."

Priscilla could stand no more. She rose from her bed, rushed into the room, and faced the three Puritans. In the voice of Priscilla Kennicott but with the words of the medicine man she scourged them.

"A good joke?" she began. "And that is what you Puritan gentlemen of God and volcanoes of Correct Thought snuffle over as a good joke? Well, with the highest respect to Professor Doctor Miles Standish, the Puritan Hearse-hound, and Professor Doctor Elder Brewster, the Plymouth Dr. Frank Crane—*Blaa!*"

She shrieked this last in their faces and fell lifeless at their feet.

She never recovered consciousness; an hour later she died. An overdose of the medicine had been too much for her weak heart.

"Poor William," comforted Elder Brewster, "you must be brave. You will miss her sorely. But console yourself with the thought that it was for the best. Priscilla has gone where she will always be happy. She has at last found that bliss which she searched for in vain on earth."

"Yes William," added Miles Standish. "Priscilla has now found eternal joy."

VIII

Heaven.

Smug saints with ill-fitting halos and imitation wings, singing meaningless hymns which Priscilla had heard countless times before.

Sleek prosaic angels flying aimlessly around playing stale songs on sickly yellow harps.

Three of the harps badly out of tune; two strings missing on another.

Moses, a Jew.

Methuselah, another Jew. Old and unshaven.

Priscilla threw herself on a cloud, sobbing.

"Well, sister, what seems to be the matter here?"

She looked up; she saw a sympathetic stranger looking down at her.

"Because you know, sister," he went on, "if you don't like it here you can always go back any time you want to."

"Do you mean to say," gasped Priscilla, "that I can return to earth?"

"You certainly can," said the stranger. "I'm sort of manager here, and whenever you see any particular part of the earth you'd like to live in, you just let me know and I'll arrange it."

He smiled and was gone.

IX

It was two hundred years before Priscilla Kennicott definitely decided that she could stand it no longer in heaven; it was another hundred years before she located a desirable place on earth to return to.

She finally selected a small town in the American northwest, far from the Puritan-tainted Plymouth; a small town in the midst of fields of beautiful waving grain; a small town free from the artificiality of large cities; a small town named Gopher Prairie.

She made known her desire to the manager; she said goodby to a small group of friends who had gathered to see her off; she heard the sound of the eternal harp playing and hymn

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singing grow gradually fainter and fainter; she closed her eyes.

When she opened them again she found herself on Main Street in Gopher Prairie.

X

From the "Heavenly Harp and Trumpet":

Mrs. Priscilla Kennicott, one of our most popular angels, left these parts last Tuesday for an extended visit to the Earth. Mrs. K. confided to Ye Editor that she would probably take up her residence in Gopher Prairie, Minn., under the name of Carol Kennicott. The "Harp and Trumpet" felicitates the citizens of Gopher Prairie on their acquisition of a charming and up-to-date young matron whose absence will be keenly regretted by her many friends in the heavenly younger married set. Good luck, Priscilla!

XI

Heaven.

Five years later.

The monthly meeting of the Celestial Browning Club.

Seated in the chair reserved for the guest of honor, the manager.

The meeting opens as usual with a reading by Brother Robert Browning of his poem "Pippa Passes"; as he proclaims that "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world", the members applaud and the manager rises and bows.

The chairman announces that "today we take up a subject in which I am sure we are all extremely interested—the popular literature of the United States".

The members listen to selected extracts from the writings of Gene Stratton-Porter, Zane Grey, and Harold Bell Wright; at the conclusion they applaud and the manager again bows.

"I am sure", says the chairman, "that we are all glad to hear that things are going so nicely in the United States." (Applause.) "And now, in conclusion, Brother Voltaire has requested permission to address us for a few minutes, and I am sure that anything Brother Voltaire has to say will be eminently worthwhile."

Brother Voltaire rises and announces that he has listened with interest to the discussion of American literature; that he, too, rejoices that all is well in this best of all possible United States; and that he hopes they will pardon him if he supplements the program by reading a few extracts from another extremely popular American book recently published under the name of "Main Street".

XII

At the next meeting of the Celestial Browning Club it was unanimously voted that the privileges of the club be denied Brother Voltaire for the period of one year, and that the name of Priscilla Kennicott be stricken from the list of non-resident members of heaven.

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THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL BOOK ASSOCIATION

By Belle M. Walker

WHY? Because it seemed to the little group of women who organized it at the inspiration of one of their number, that such an association had a place and could be of service in the wider distribution of books. According to Burges Johnson, in a recent issue of "Harper's Magazine", there are sixty millions of persons in the country who never see a book. But the Women's National Book Association was formed before this arresting statement was made. It was organized four years ago, with the aim of bringing within its membership all the women in the country who were in any way connected with books, either in their making or their distributing. As far as the writer knows, it is the only association in the world that has such a function. Its members include authors, publishers, illustrators, printers, advertisers, editors, buyers, saleswomen, etc.

Impossible? Of course, *that* was said, as in the case of every new venture launched. However, the Association's obsequies have not yet been attended—as a matter of fact it is a very healthy infant considering the time busy women have been able to give to it. It has thrived as only a thing does that makes an appeal. Some persons thought it dangerous to try to correlate the different phases of the book business. But why? Is there anything more important than to aim for an intelligent distribution of the dynamic force of literature? Shall that power be limited to those who have already felt and know its potency, those who have already reaped the benefit of its influence? Is there no urge on the part of the publisher and the bookseller to extend that influence? No desire to bring the reader and the right book together? Books are vital things—things of tremendous energy that need the bookseller's careful attention and about which he cannot have too much knowledge. Next to the publisher his responsibility is a big one. And to serve, to help to broaden, and to assist in any way the book business, is the purpose of the Women's National Book Association. Its monthly meetings are planned to stimulate an interest in books and their influence. The year before last the life of a book was presented from the manufacture of the paper through the various processes of publishing and marketing. This has been followed by a study of the financial side.

Over one thousand publications are offered the bewildered reader this spring; yet we are reminded by Mr. Johnson in the article referred to, that there are fewer bookstores in this country today than there were fifty years ago when the output was smaller and the population less. Is it not time for the women to try to help?

Much has been written about the inefficiency of booksellers, some of which is justified and some is not. The time has passed when you can ask for John Gilpin and be told that "it is not out yet", or when Stephen Leacock's amusing little brochure on "The Methods

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of Mr. Sellyer" applies. In that humorous little tale the bookseller had his own "methods" of disposing of stock that "the publishers unloaded on him". When he was asked by an interested bystander if he had read the two books he was pushing he said, "No", "with the air of a milkman who had been asked to try a glass of his own milk". This is funny but not good salesmanship.

The aim of the Association to bring together the makers of books has been very successful both at the monthly meetings and at the annual dinner (which occurred this year in March). Reports of the meetings are given in "The Publishers' Weekly" and "Bookseller and Stationer". Among those who have spoken for the Association are Kate Douglas Wiggin, the late Marjorie Benton Cooke, Yvette Guilbert, Edna Ferber, Josephine Daskam Bacon, Sergeant Farnum, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Untermeyer, Hendrik Van Loon, Lathrop P. Harper, Frederic G. Melcher, John T. Witsil, and a dozen more. The effect on the saleswoman of hearing these speakers cannot be measured. Contact with author and publisher serves as a vital stimulus to interest her in the book of that author and that publisher, and is a talking vantage point that no amount of circulars or newspaper advertisements could possible give her. The "personal touch" is as true here as elsewhere.

All the members of the Association are representative of the fabric of the book industry, and they are most truly "useless each without the other". Where would the author be without the publisher? What business would the publisher have without the author? Both are in turn dependent upon the marketing of the books and, if we can believe the figures that have been given us, the surface of book distribution has not been scratched. It is appalling to think that there are people to whom a book—with its wealth of treasure in profit and amusement—is unknown; how to reach such persons is an important business.

That the Association has been recognized as a factor in the book business was demonstrated last year by an invitation to the Association to join the American Booksellers' Association (an honor much appreciated but declined). At the Booksellers' convention both this year and last two members of the women's association were elected officers.

And so the Women's National Book Association feels that, young and imperfect as it is, it has a place in the fallow fields of book distribution. For its desire is to be both pupil and guide in the literary labyrinth, to be with those who are building for the great future of the limitless possibilities of the book business.

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THE MOSQUITO

By D. H. Lawrence

WHEN did you start your tricks,
Monsieur?

What do you stand on such high legs for?
Why this length of shredded shank,
You exaltation?

Is it so that you shall lift your centre of gravity upwards
And weigh no more than air as you alight upon me,
Stand upon me weightless, you phantom?

I heard a woman call you the Winged Victory
In sluggish Venice.
You turn your head toward your tail, and smile.

How can you put so much devilry
In that translucent phantom shred
Of a frail corpus?

Queer, with your thin wings and your streaming legs
How you sail like a heron, or a dull clot of air,
A nothingness.

Yet what an aura surrounds you;
Your evil little aura, prowling, and casting a numbness on my mind.

That is your trick, your bit of filthy magic:
Invisibility, and the anæsthetic power
To deaden my attention in your direction.
But I know your game now, streaky sorcerer.

Queer, how you stalk and prowl the air
In circles and evasions, enveloping me,
Ghoul on wings,
Winged Victory.

Settle, and stand on long thin shanks,
Eyeing me sideways, and cunningly conscious that I am aware,
You speck.

I hate the way you lurch off sideways into air,
Having read my thoughts against you.

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Come then, let us play at unawares,
And see who wins in this sly game of bluff,
Man or mosquito.

You don't know that I exist, and I don't know that you exist.
Now then!

It is your trump,
It is your hateful little trump,
You pointed fiend,
Which shakes my sudden blood to hatred of you;
It is your small, high, hateful bugle in my ear.

Why do you do it?
Surely it is bad policy.

They say you can't help it.

If that is so, then I believe a little in Providence protecting the innocent.
But it sounds so amazingly like a slogan,
A yell of triumph as you snatch my scalp.

Blood, red blood,
Super-magical,
Forbidden liquor.

I behold you stand
For a second enspasmed in oblivion,
Obscenely ecstasied,
Sucking live blood,
My blood.

Such silence, such suspended transport,
Such gorging,
Such obscenity of trespass.

You stagger
As well you may;
Only your accursed hairy frailty,
Your own imponderable weightlessness,
Saves you, wafts you away on the very draught my anger makes in its snatching.

Away with a pæan of derision,
You winged blood-drop.

Can I not overtake you?
Are you one too many for me,
Winged Victory?
Am I not mosquito enough to out-mosquito you?

Queer, what a big stain my blood makes
Beside the infinitesimal faint smear of you!
Queer, what a dim dark smudge you have disappeared into!

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THE LONDONER

Dearth of Books—Popular Writers—"The Knave of Diamonds" as a Play—Harold Chapin—Popular Plays—Lord Ribblesdale's Memoirs—A New Publisher—Samuel Butler—Bertrand Russell—The Prosecution of Mrs. Stopes's Book—Alec Waugh's "Pleasure".

LONDON, *May*, 1921.

I WAS speaking the other day to a man who is in charge of the reviewing of one of our great dailies. He told me that never within his recollection had there been a time when so few new books of all descriptions reached the office of his paper. Also, that the same could be said of the particulars which every publisher sends out regarding his forthcoming volumes. There is an absolute dearth of new books. One reason suggested in explanation was that nobody is writing books at all. New authors, deterred by the tales of difficulty, are keeping their efforts for the movies; older authors are finding the same field more attractive than the ordinary ways of publishing; publishers are hesitating about the acceptance of books which in normal times they would be ready to undertake with a fair hope of success. And yet business is not so very bad. Booksellers are selling certain books with ease. They are selling many volumes of reprints at cheaper prices. One or two of the more celebrated of new volumes are doing well. People are reading in preference to going to the theatre. Everywhere the theatres are suffering as the result of recent labor troubles and the increased difficulty of getting home after the theatres are over. But why the publishing trade should be weak there is no telling. It is obvious that there are readers in great numbers. Each day I see scores of them leaving or arriving at Mudie's. I myself have recently asked for books of some newness, and I have been given them without demur. This shows that, besides being in demand, these books are being bought by the libraries. If it be true that authors are holding their hands, they would be better employed in using them to other purpose, in writing books which we can read. Unless the autumn is fuller we are likely to have a book famine, and then the numbers of copies sold of those books which are actually ready, will exceed records.

* * * *

Popular authors, of course, are never affected by these fluctuations. There are always readers for anything they may produce. There are always publishers eager to make money from the sale of popular authors. Popular authors can always write. If they could not, they would not be popular authors. It is a part, and a distinguished part, of their equipment. They are above the time and the political situation. Sir Hall Caine is preparing for the press a new novel no less long and attractive than its predecessors. There is a huge public waiting to wolf that novel. Ethel M. Dell no sooner finishes one book than one sees the hoardings covered with advertisements of another. The books appear, they are read with zest and passed from hand to hand, and it is

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impossible to keep pace with their names and their variations of plot. It is similar with the works of other authors, but Miss Dell is the supreme example. Since the slow growth to success of "The Way of an Eagle", Miss Dell has been the most popular author in these islands. She is devoured even by those who sneer self-defensively at her work. Hers is a great position, and she must enjoy it.

One of Miss Dell's novels, "The Knave of Diamonds", has just been dramatized, and I have seen the play. Although I went on the second night, when there is generally a dearth of audience for a new play, the theatre was quite full. I myself booked seats beforehand, and could only get a couple of stalls far back in the theatre. And each day there is a long queue waiting outside the entrances to the pit and gallery. Remarkably enough, these queues are composed entirely of women. It is to women that Miss Dell's novels appeal. They like the cruelty of those strong silent men who torture themselves and their beloved spinsters with so much sang-froid. And the play is just the same as the novels of Miss Dell. And yet it is less good, because it is without conviction, whereas the novels are one sacrifice after another to the truth that is in Miss Dell. They could not be so successful if they were exploitations. They are variants upon one theme only, but they are variants at the bidding of genuine conceptions of what life is like. The play is not convinced or convincing. It is built up. As a result the audience laughed at the very moments when they would in reading be moved. That is because theatre audiences are self-conscious to an extent not allowable when an individual reader is surprised by emotion in the pages of a book. The play may run, but I doubt it. If it is not a success the cause will be that the genuineness of the book has evaporated in dramatization.

For me the sterling moment of the piece was when a young wife warned a young husband not to be unkind to her. He swore that he would not, but pressed for the reason behind this particular request. The reply was whispered inaudibly. Clearly the young wife belonged to the Victorian era. I believe young women of our own day, when they find that they are going to become mothers, are less reticent. I suspect that they blurt the information out for all to hear. At any rate, a young friend of mine recently shocked her mother-in-law by conversations upon the subject most unsuited to older ears, and was forced—being at a distance from her friends—to converse with me by means of the written page. I am sure she would not have whispered to her husband. But of course one reason why Miss Dell's novels are so popular is that they are not alarmingly modern, and do not deal with unfamiliar situations.

* * * *

I hear that the late Harold Chapin's best play, "The New Morality", is shortly to be produced in London. It has already been seen at a private performance given by one of the play-producing societies; but a West End run was desirable. The play, if it has not already been performed in New York, as I think it may have been, should be seen there. It is extremely light, but extremely dexterous, and the comedy is consistently good. In a small theatre it should gain much, because of the intimate character which a small theatre enables a play to preserve. There are only five characters in it, and of these three are the vitally contrasted figures. Another charac-

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ter, also important, never appears. She sends a messenger. As played in the original performance all three principals were superb. I hear that the theatre chosen in London is unfortunately large, and as the scene of the whole play is a houseboat it will be observed that this is a pity. But I hope that the wit of the dialogue will carry even a large audience with it. The text will probably be published. Arrangements are being made to give in front of "The New Morality" a short and powerful play of John Galsworthy's. With such a strong addition to the entertainment the producers appear justifiably confident of success.

Chapin was one of the best writers to lose his life in the war. He was a young man, and his work was showing increasing merit. At first he allowed himself to collect the unimaginative fantastic so much beloved in Chelsea; but as he went on, and his touch became more sure, he turned resolutely from pierrots and their kindred, and peeled away superfluous trimmings. That is to say, he found, or was finding, his natural bent. "The New Morality" was the best play he wrote, but he also translated a bizarre and extraordinary play from the Austrian which was probably improved by his adaptation. It was a play about a rather crazy tailor's assistant who read an ironic book about social conditions, accepted its caustic teaching literally, stole a dress suit, went to an important party at which a member of the government was the principal guest, amazingly became a member of Parliament himself, and finally a new evangelist in the cause of Labor. The thing is astonishing, because it is unlike anything we habitually see here. I hope it may be produced. With all its faults, this play might set a new fashion in drama writing, and if it opened up fresh paths to our dramatists we could all stand round and bless it with loud hurrahs.

* * * *

I said just above that the theatres were doing badly. This is strictly the case. Not only does the coal strike check the number of trains available, but warmer weather, general inclinations to economy, and to some extent a feebleness in the sort of entertainment that is being provided by sheep-like theatre lessees, are having a marked effect. During the strike most of the theatres have been half empty. There have been few exceptions. Two of these have been "Clemence Dane's" "Bill of Divorcement" and "Sapper's" "Bulldog Drummond". The latter is a superb illustration of what the public likes. Applause is tumultuous at the various ruses by which Bulldog Drummond circumvents his enemies. It is precisely similar to the applause created by ancient melodramas. This play looks as though it might run forever. It will not do so, for such things do not occur; but one cannot foresee the causes of withdrawal, unless it should happen that people are satisfied with one visit. It is the double, treble, innumerable visits that bring enduring success. This, besides the fame of the play, which has reached the provinces, is what has led to the long run here of "Chu Chin Chow". I am told that "Chu Chin Chow" is at last coming off—in July; but I shall never forget the anecdote of the old lady who was asked out one Whit Monday evening. She said: "No, I'm sorry. I always go to 'Chu Chin Chow' on Whit Mondays."

* * * *

Lord Ribblesdale, I hear, is writing his reminiscences. This book should have considerable interest. The let-

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ters of Lord Ribblesdale's son, Charles Lister, were remarkable, and were published after the boy had been killed in the war. They appeared under the supervision of his father. If Lord Ribblesdale's own book has any of that family quality which one would expect, it should be of the greatest value.

* * * *

Recently we had an addition to the list of new publishers, in the person of Jonathan Cape, for a long time associated with the firm of Duckworth and Company. Mr. Cape signalized his arrival by the announcements of several remarkable books, one of which was the Russian impressions of Mrs. Sheridan. The news now comes that he has bought the business of A. C. Fifield. The name of Fifield may not mean anything to American readers, but here it is associated for us all with the works of Samuel Butler. Practically all Butler's books have been reprinted under the care of Mr. Fifield. The best-known of them have sold largely. I suppose that with the books in the hands of Mr. Cape we shall have the list completed at last. I understand that, besides one or two reissues of such books as "The Authoress of the Odyssey", there will at last be a new edition of Butler's book about Varallo. Varallo was Butler's chosen haunt, and he wrote a book about it which was set up and even printed. But then Butler revisited the scene of the book, made many changes in the text, and caused to be printed of the new version only two copies. The type was then distributed. With the passage of time the new material also has become rather out of date, and the task of bringing the book thoroughly up to date has become incalculable. Meanwhile lovers of Butler want the book. They are to have it. Within a year, I suppose that nothing will remain unprinted. If only in the matter of Butler's works, Mr. Cape has made a coup.

Publishers, however, matter little in comparison to editors, when it comes to a question of this kind. And Butler has been most unusually well served. His executors were R. A. Streatfeild and Henry Festing Jones, the author of the biography. Streatfeild is dead, but Mr. Jones has gone on working with beautiful devotion, and with the republication of the book of Varallo his task will be completed. Not the interest of it, for there are bound to be innumerable details in the future; but the sheer hard work. Owing to circumstances, there has always had to be some relation between the earnings of Butler's books and the process of getting the others into print. It is therefore highly gratifying to know that the demand for Butler is increasing to such an extent that his entire production—of course with the exception of the enormous biography of his grandfather—will shortly be available. Once it is so, there is no reason why there should ever be any failure to obtain a single book of his whenever the whim strikes a casual purchaser to own someone with which he has been unfamiliar.

* * * *

News comes from Japan that Bertrand Russell is dead in China; but I hope that this is untrue. It is the sort of rumor which might turn up about anybody so far away. Bertrand Russell is one of the best brains we have—logical and unsentimental; and his latest book must be very near to publication now. As far as I can tell, it is still called "The Analysis of Mind", under which title I announced it some months ago. In substance the book will be composed of lectures delivered in London in 1919, but it will be much revised and coordinated. I

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heard only one of these lectures, but I was astounded at the audience to which it was delivered. This was composed of all sorts of men and women, brown and white, old, young, and middle-aged. It was followed with the closest attention, and the questions afterward asked ranged from real hard nuts to the most abject piffle. Mr. Russell gave no sign that some questions were not worth answering, but was patient with all and answered each question individually, as it was asked. Perhaps I should say, in explanation of my surprise, that in England the lecture is far less of a recognized form of entertainment than it is in America, if one may judge from the number of men who have set out from England in the last few years to deliver lectures in America. Very few of our writers lecture much in England, except in scholastic establishments; and the lecturing here is generally very casual, merely a matter of sportive speeches to after-dinner audiences. How seriously some speakers regard the pastime I cannot pretend to know; but I personally have never taken much stock in the business. In fact, the last time I spoke in public I was assured by an over-candid woman who was brought up afterward, that I was the most perfectly silly person she had ever met. Such compliments are rare, or at least the form this one took is unusual.

* * * *

The news that some book by Mrs. Stopes (presumably the one which is here called "Married Love") has been prosecuted by an agency for the dissemination of Moral Purity in the United States, has caused a little sensation in England. This book has of course had a wide sale. It is, however, perfectly clean in intention, and I know that in a number of cases it has brought happiness to good young people who were lost in the abysmal ignorance of sex which ruins hosts of well-intentioned marriages. I am told that the English edition is now sold in sealed wrappers bearing an assurance that the seal is used in order that the book shall be read only by those seriously seeking information. How the seal can do anything of the sort I am at a loss to discover. If one wants a pornographic book it will take more than a seal to deter one from its purchase. At any rate, the seal is an earnest of the publishers' integrity. I remember reading in a recently published work that a certain bookseller, after serving a young girl with a sealed envelope, turned to a waiting customer and said: "We call that the young ladies' Bible because so many of them come in for it on the sly—it is 'Maria Monk'."

This reminds me of another unsavory anecdote. A certain boy, the terror of his family, was given half a crown. He used it in the purchase of various articles of torment, such as apparently-lighted cigarettes which he laid upon costly tablecloths, matches which did not strike, telescopes the use of which led to a squirt of water in the eye of the would-be sightseer, and so on. His chef d'œuvre was a book in which was concealed a cracker. For the full success of the cracker-laden book it was essential that it should be opened with a smart avidity. In order to secure that avidity, the book was adorned with a most sensational cover. The cover read: "A Night in Paris!" and below the title was the word: "Shocking!" You can imagine all members of leagues for purity dashing at the book. What a surprise they must all have received when the cracker went off! This also reminds me of a recent play in which a spinster

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of irreproachable integrity made herself busy with scandal. She had an itch for the base, and she saw lechery in stones and wickedness in the running brooks. Finally, which was the false element in the play, she was covered with confusion. In real life this does not happen. There is no confusion. But there is no doubt that a little wickedness, or even a tendency to moral error, is less unappetizing in the long run than that absorption in suspicion which creates vice for the pillory. In fact nobody is quite so wicked as the pure suppose. We are all agog when we hear of a new scandal. We dash at it with the most moral interest in the world. We are alive to its every implication. And when we give our interest the name of Puritanism we are begging the question. We suspect everybody, but nobody must suspect ourselves. We are sacrosanct. Only, we desire above all things to protect the innocent from contamination. This is where we are wrong. It is true that innocent minds are corrupted, but corruption comes more from suppression than from anything else. Therefore, it seems to me, the prosecution of any book for its indecency is a mistake. Far more harm is done by suggestiveness than by honest dealing with matters of sex. Our libraries should be made aware of this, and our censors. At present suggestiveness is free and outspokenness is persecuted. Whatever its faults, which are in the direction of sentimentality, Mrs. Stopes's book is one which was written with sincerity and without pornographic intention. Many novels with a high religious tone do more harm than it could do. They introduce a solemn note of sensuality into the thoughts of young people, who are led to dwell upon physical delights and to conceal their obsession. Driven below, the preoccupation becomes terrible. It creates new censors. Nothing could be worse for literature or for life.

* * * *

I have been reading Alec Waugh's new book, which is not a novel but a collection of short stories. It bears the covering title "Pleasure", and you may guess at the note of the book from the use of such a title for some lugubrious tales. There is a good deal of disillusion in the book. It represents fairly the attitude of mind of a number—if not the majority—of the younger men returned from the war to an old world no better (but rather worse) than it was before all went to pieces. This note of pessimism will perhaps mark the newer work for a time. It was only natural that it should, although one finds oneself strangely at sea with Mr. Waugh's book. There seems to be only one story of school life in the volume, and this is a tale of love or its public school equivalent. It is well handled, and indeed the whole book is extremely competent in its presentation; but I must admit that I should have preferred something a little more robust from one of our promising writers. If the older men are to provide all the optimism it will put a strain upon their endurance. We who are older have to face advancing years and a gradual decay of sensibility. It needs all our courage. Is youth not to reinforce us? If it does not, if our very young are to lose the savor of life so early, then we are lost indeed.

SIMON PURE

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MURRAY HILL GOES ABOUT

NEW YORK, *May*, 1921.

MR. Doubleday's note of invitation was so informal in tone that I had not expected anything approaching so large a party. The long general room of the club called the Coffee House, on West Forty-fifth Street, was thronged when I entered. More shirted bosoms arriving all the while. Dr. Maurice Francis Egan came in in a top hat.

We had assembled to meet Sydney S. Pawling, head of the English publishing house of William Heinemann, of noble history. Roundabout here and there I spotted J. O'H. Cosgrave, Henry S. Canby, Lawrence Abbott, Ellis Parker Butler, Tom Masson, Francis Bellamy, Robert Benchley, Melville E. Stone, C. Alphonso Smith, Wadsworth Camp, Harry Hansen, Julian Street, and Lyman Beecher Stowe. And, of course, a strong contingent of forty-second degree Doubleday-Pageians: "F. N. D.", president of the company, Arthur W. Page, Herbert S. Houston, and Harry E. Maule. For (have I not said?) this dinner had something to do with the association recently established between the houses of Heinemann and D. P. & Co.

Dinner was called shortly. I do not think I have ever seen handsomer candles decorating a dinner table. They were about a foot in circumference and a number of feet tall. I think it would have been a happy idea to have seated Dr. John Farrar, the venerable editor of THE BOOKMAN, next door to Clifford Smythe, the young *révolté* literary editor of the New York "Times". But it was not so. I found myself seated next to Louis Joseph Vance. Throughout a good part of the time of our meal he propounded to me a regimen of diet which will increase your literary output I forget how many words a day. I agreed to try it.

At the speakers' table was a good-sized model of the famous windmill designed by William Nicholson as the trademark for William Heinemann. Mr. Doubleday in introducing his guest stated a little matter in connection with this new Anglo-American relationship. The letter-head on the new Heinemann stationery, it seems, reads: "Partners: Sydney S. Pawling, Frank N. Doubleday." When he first saw it Mr. Doubleday said he remarked to Mr. Pawling: "Now if the inclusion of my name on that paper causes you any embarrassment just leave it off." Mr. Pawling replied that no explanation from him as to his feeling in the matter was necessary, as the name was required to be on there by English law.

Mr. Pawling, a well-built elderly gentleman of distinguished Englishman effect, drooping white mustache, wore the ample corner of a white handkerchief protruding from the breast pocket of his dress coat. He was rich in reminiscences of—among others of a glorious earlier day—Whistler, Meredith, Stevenson, and Mark Twain. Henry Morgenthau, a brisk, emphatic figure, spoke of woodcraft, and Ernest Thompson Seton, who presents somewhat the effect of a leaning tree, talked of international relations. No; I mean it was the other way about.

Mr. Doubleday then called upon a

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couple of diners somewhat down the line. Christopher Morley responded neatly enough with a little story as to the similarity between publishers and undertakers—it is the function of both to put an expression of Christian faith and happy peace on the faces of, so to say, their clients. William McFee, however, was much taken aback. A quiet man of wiry figure and weather-beaten countenance marked by rugged toil, he arose slowly and announced that about the only times in his life when he had been called upon to speak in a formal way, had been when he was required to give an order. He feared that if he should do that here he might make a break. He was glad, however, to be among publishers and editors, as he had lived so remote from them that he had never been able to make out what it was they *did*.

Everybody got a leather bound booklet of blank pages which everybody else autographed. And Don Marquis, that silver-haired cherubim, Morley, and Murray Hill together wended forth homeward. The author of "The Old Soak" invited us to have a soda water before we parted. By the lateness of the hour I was somewhat troubled. Because I should have to get up unusually early to get that morning train for Atlantic City, to attend the twenty-first annual convention of the American Booksellers' Association.

The friend I was to go down with and I had had more or less dispute about the matter. There was a train, I saw by the time table, to leave at the comfortable hour of 10.12. He declared there was a better train at eight o'clock. But I explained the matter to him: that was standard time, or whatever you call it, not daylight saving time; and so we'd have to be there at seven o'clock by our watches. Altogether too early. So we arranged to meet at the Pennsylvania station at a few minutes before nine, to go by the ten o'clock train. Well, figure it out yourself, however it is. We raced for our tickets and then had a wait of three hours.

Shortly before the right time for the train along came Frank Shay, the lively bookseller of Christopher Street, Greenwich Village, in company with Charles Boni, formerly of Boni and Liveright. In the smoker of our car we joined up with two of Messrs. Scribner's travelers. Though the Booksellers' Special had gone down the afternoon before, and this seemed to be all of "us" immediately in sight, a considerable concourse of us newly arrived turned up at the Hotel Traymore.

Dominating the flashing scene was a figure which at first appeared to me to be some sort of grandissimo poised before the hotel entrance. Yet notwithstanding its resplendency this sumptuous figure had about it something not unfamiliar to my mind. Could it be? Yes; it was, 'pon my soul! no less a person than Henry Blackman Sell, sometime literary editor of the Chicago "Daily News", editor now of "Harper's Bazar". One-time a man of letters, now a man of fashion, extremely youthful, delicately slender, sheathed in a form-fitting suit of wide checks which looked as if it might have been designed for the opening day of the racing season, set off with pearl-grey spats, a cane, and a rich olive complexion.

When we had complied with the formalities of obtaining our rooms, our badges, banquet tickets, programs, and so on, the afternoon session of the first day of the convention was about to get under way, Eugene L. Herr, president of the American Booksellers'

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Association, presiding. The convention had opened in the morning with an introductory address on the theme of what the people want to read, by Carl H. Milam of the American Library Association. Mr. Sell, as the first speaker of the afternoon (still wearing the same clothes), performed divers callisthenics of humor, and then turning serious attacked with considerable force of argument the current slogan "Buy a Book a Week".

Mr. Sell was followed by the contributing editor to THE BOOKMAN, Robert Cortes Holliday. Mr. Holliday wore a modish spring suit of brownish tinge, dull red tie, and expensive-looking new tan shoes. He was handsome and distingué. He got several good hands but I do not remember a thing that he said. Probably there was nothing memorable about his address. A lady not on the printed program but who fortunately was invited to speak came next, May Lamberton Becker, conductor of the department "The Reader's Guide" in "The Literary Review" of the New York "Evening Post". Mrs. Becker was not "for" the current type of realism in American fiction at all. It was her opinion that the best selling book in the United States today was the book most disliked. The next speaker, Daniel Longwell, clerk in the Pennsylvania Terminal Book Shop, New York City, a young man with a very deft and engaging manner, shrewdly surveyed the different types of book buyers and their wants.

"Discussion" here followed. Among those who arose in their places to take part in this was a delightful old gentleman with a long white beard, who very charmingly told how he stimulated interest in nature books among his customers by keeping flowers in his store.

Now throughout this program I had been sitting not far from a lady of very distinctive appearance, of far more striking appearance than her pictures at all indicate. How this effect could be I do not know, but she looked at once like some kind of cowgirl (I don't know much about cowgirls) and like a decidedly literary person. This lady was Honoré Willsie, author of "The Enchanted Canyon" and formerly editor-in-chief of the Butterick publications, and now next on the list of speakers. I had been presented to her before the session and she had spoken of herself (in a quite serious voice) as being one of the "victims" of the afternoon. It had been clearly evident throughout the program that she was regarding with apprehension the moment of her "call". Her companion—and "second", so to say—William Morrow, of the celebrated Frederick A. Stokes Company, it was also evident, had been endeavoring to nerve her for the ordeal.

Her time had come. She arose, tall and slender, erect as a spire, her simple black dress like a silhouette drawn in long sweeping lines. An oval face, cleanly chiseled features of charming (of poetic) dignity, her head bound in a heavy coil of jet-black hair. Chin slightly tilted upward...she hesitated ...then began to speak in a voice of appealing, haunting cadence. She, too, was not for our present realism in fiction. "Our lives are surrounded by mystery," she said.

The author of "The Enchanted Canyon" enchanted the convention. A gentleman who should get some kind of medal asked that a rising vote of thanks be given Mrs. Willsie. I arose to my full height, and if I hadn't felt that it would have embarrassed the lady, I should have stood on a chair.

In the evening, the costume dance

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given by the Women's National Book Association. Very gay and very amusing and very much all-one-big-family-like. Ballots cast gave the ladies' first prize to Wells's "Outline of History", represented by Grace Gaige; men's first prize to "Tarzan of the Apes", Edward Burt. Second men's prize, or rather I mean men's second prize, went to H. S. Hutchinson for his "Captain Ely". A rollicking and highly comical looking diminutive couple got up in jumpers and huge false faces, who had been rolling about the floor a good part of the evening, carried off the ladies' second prize. They were "Raggedy Ann" and "Raggedy Andy", whose names in private life are Dorothy and Sydney Grant.

Following sessions devoted to discussion of such subjects as: how can the bookseller create a public and give it what it wants?—advertising and publicity as aids—practical methods of increasing bookshop efficiency. But at a booksellers' convention liveliness goes right along with the elucidation of principles of business. Fellow had his picture taken—where does this hook up? Why, it's the beginning of a story told by one of the speakers at one of the purely business sessions, to illustrate something in connection with the promotion of the book trade. Fellow had his picture taken. When shown the proofs he didn't like 'em at all. Was sore. Declared he looked like a monkey. Said the photographer: "You should have considered that before you had your picture taken." At one of these business sessions it was that Frederic Melcher, esquire, the astute, dynamic, and towering editor of "The Publishers' Weekly", in a ringing speech put across one of his pet ideas, the idea of recognition being given to really good bookselling by the establishment of an Honorary Fellowship of American Booksellers.

I am sorry that I got switched off from seeing the play given at the Steel Pier Theatre. The Guilty Guild presented "Eva, The Bookseller's Daughter", "An Heroic Tragedy" in three acts, by Robert Gordon Anderson. Act I: The Overstok bookstore in Xeniapolis. Songs included "I'm Only a Bookseller's Daughter" and "Said Mr. Shakespeare to Harold Bell Wright".

I should have been sorrier had I missed the banquet, which an advance circular truly announced was going to be "A Circus", "A Dazzling Assemblage of Antics and Acts" "exhibited in the Subdebmarine Grill", in more everyday language called the Submarine Grill of the Traymore. Directly upon our finding our seats the dinner was preceded by, to quote the specific language of the document just mentioned, "A Sinister, Saturnine and Symbolical Progress, Procession or Pageant Embodying, Exemplifying and Erroneously Exhibiting All the Principles, Practices and Persiflages of Bookmen, Bibliophiles and Brass Bandits." From each of the fifty tables bobbed a cluster of toy balloons, which between courses were rocked in a mighty breeze of song ("Those Endearing Young Charms", "Sweet Rosie O'Grady", and so on), and which after the dinner were worn (many of them) as sky-flying bouquets by high-spirited young ladies.

On a dais the speakers' table; behind it (reading from left to right): Mr. Herr, presiding; Dr. Andrew F. West, dean of the graduate college of Princeton University; Robert Bridges, editor of "Scribner's Magazine"; Roland S. Morris, United States Ambassador to Japan, 1917-1921; and

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Edward W. Bok, formerly editor of ———, etc. William Allen White also was to have been among the speakers. But it was explained that directly upon his arrival at Atlantic City he had received a telegram informing him of serious injuries received by his daughter in a fall from a horse, and he had immediately returned to Emporia.

Mr. Bridges, in general effect suggesting an uncommonly good-looking faun with a decidedly stiff shirt front, did some very first-rate toastmastering. I was somewhat surprised by Mr. Bok. He is not as funny looking as his pictures give you a notion. A lithe figure of a gentleman, silvered hair, noble prow of a nose, an effect of all his features joining in a smile all the while, moving with what might be called a jaunty stoop. Perpetually smoked cigarettes, before and after speaking.

What, he began his talk by asking, was the happy length for an afterdinner speech? It might, he remarked, be said to be like the proper length for a lady's dress—long enough to cover the subject and short enough to be interesting. He had, he said, found New York too small. He wanted to go to a city where there was pep, where people were doing something—so, naturally, he went to Philadelphia. And became, as Eugene Field said, the nicest ladies' editor in America. People who wonder, he continued, why magazines are not better, do not realize how much worse they might be—don't know what doesn't get into magazines. There was, for instance, an essay 360 pages long entitled "Woman". It began: "What has she not done?...Nothing!" This had come to him but had not got into his publication. Neither had a story about a young man who had been offered twenty-five dollars to become a drunkard. He was tempted, because he was poor, but he refused. As he turned away he found a million dollars in gold on the sidewalk. Here my notes become confused. I am sorry this is so, because Mr. Bok had among his rich store a very pleasant story about a man who swallowed a gold dollar and didn't know whether he was a dollar in or a dollar out.

Mr. Morris recalled that not so long ago our books on Japan bore such titles as "The Charm of Japan", "The Flowery Kingdom", and "In Ghostly Japan". Now, "Must We Fight Japan?" and titles like that. He reminded us that the east and the west had never succeeded in understanding one another. It was our duty to discourage and discredit highly colored statements about conditions that exist, and endeavor to make a real success of this contact of east and west which has been marked by failure in the past.

Mr. Bridges, commenting upon Dr. West's proficiency in Latin, pulled a line of what he said was Latin (with American pronunciation) in introducing Dr. West, which (interpreted) meant, he said, that after Dean West had spoken we'd have a good time. Dr. West, however, was far from a blight on the other good time to follow.

* * * *

"Do you not think," she asked as we got into a rolling chair, "that booksellers are the nicest people in the world?"

"Why, yes," I said, "come to think of it, I don't know but they are. The cheerfullest, friendliest, and happiest in their business."

MURRAY HILL

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LITERARY PORTRAITS: FOUR

HEYWOOD BROUN

BROUN wears 13 shoes and is drawn to scale, a 230-pound Barrymore, pretty discouraged about his appearance. As Mencken is the professional male, so is Broun the professional father, for out of the mouths of babes cometh copy. He is younger than H 3d and personally much more timid. No one is so impotent that, meeting Broun face to face, he cannot frighten him into any lie. Any mouse can make this elephant squeal. Yet I know no more honest being, for, when not threatened, his speech is an innocent emptying of his mind, as a woman empties her purse, himself genuinely curious about its contents. And, threatened or not, he acquires all courage the moment he mounts a typewriter. When celebrating and serving the masses at that altar, he gives the truth till it hurts. Rich in the liking of his gang, he himself is non-friendly. Friendliness is an activity and he the great inert. Broun is as young, as humane, as amusing, as brave, and as accessible as a set of Dickens—and just as likely to come running to meet you.

Alexander Woollcott

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SOME RING HEROES OF FICTION

By Arthur Bartlett Maurice

With Sketches by Richard Lahey

IT was George Saintsbury who said, "All fights are good reading", at a time when the profession of such an opinion required a certain amount of courage. For the ring in fiction was as much an outlaw as its soiled and sordid practitioners were in actual life. There was a period—late Victorian in England, and Rogers group and plush family portrait album in America—when reading about fights was a pastime to be indulged in surreptitiously, just as the enjoyment of a then brutal and ugly battle between bruisers meant a furtive night journey on a river barge or to a remote barn in company with the driftage of the underworld. We have changed all that. The modern pugilist of invention has not quite achieved the distinction of heavenly ancestry that was invariably ascribed to the cestus-wielding pugilist of the literature of the Greeks and Romans—Pollux was a son of Jupiter, Amycus a son of Neptune, and Eryx a son of Venus—but in the Valhalla of fiction he has become a person at least tolerated, and less and less regarded in the light of an unwelcome and unusual intruder. As every new fighting man enters that Valhalla, fewer are the eyebrows lifted in questioning surprise. In the romance of sport the tale of the ring has taken its place with the tales of the diamond, the gridiron, and the links.

The fighting man of modern fiction is a technical personage technically

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considered. The stories about him take for granted an intimate knowledge on the part of the reader of the flavor, ceremony, and tradition of the ring. Thus the story of the fight is a story sufficient unto itself. In fiction it was not always so.

The very best story of the prize ring ever written is Conan Doyle's "Rodney Stone". That is the statement of a fact as well as the expression of an opinion. It contains two of the most stirring fights in fiction, the battle in the coach house between young Jim Harrison and Joe Berks, and the still more dramatic struggle between Jim's supposed uncle, the smith, and Crab Wilson, which is the culmination of the book. But that splendid encounter in the ring on Crawley Downs is not merely the conflict of two hardy bruisers for a money prize. Bound up with the issue are vaster stakes; the destinies of Sir Charles Tregellis, of young Jim, and young Jim's real father, Lord Avon. Fiction has few more moving scenes than the unexpected appearance of the old smith at the saving moment to take the place of the nephew supposedly kidnaped by the minions of Sir Lothian Hume.

Again, in Doyle's "The Croxley Master", we have a battle dignified by a worthy motive. The Master himself, battered product of many professional encounters, fights for the money stake and for the honor of the coal pits in which he works. But his opponent and conqueror, Robert Montgomery, sees in the struggle which has been thrust upon him the chance to complete his education at the university. There is a third battle to be found in the pages of Conan Doyle, one involving the Tom Spring of British ring history, the tale entitled "The Lord Falconbridge", in the volume of short stories "The Lost Galley". Like the chapters revolving about the old ring and the men of the ring of "Rodney Stone", that tale may be traced back to the author's reading in the pages of such books as "Pugilistica", and "Boxiana". In the little-read "Through the Magic Door" Doyle has paid tribute to the three brown volumes of "Pugilistica", given him years ago by Robert Barr. They were, he said, a mine in which you can never pick for half an hour without striking it rich.

> Alas! for the horrible slang of those days, the vapid, witless Corinthian talk, with its ogles and fogles, its pointless jokes, its maddening habit of italicising a word or two in every sentence. Even those stern and desperate encounters, fit sports for the men of Albuera and Waterloo, become dull and vulgar, in that dreadful jargon. You have to turn to Hazlitt's account of the encounter between the Gasman and the Bristol Bull, to feel the savage strength of it all. It is a hardened reader who does not wince even in print before that frightful right-hander which felled the giant, and left him in "red ruin" from eyebrow to jaw.

Hazlitt's "red ruin" was of the fashion of the oldtime descriptive writing of the fighting men. It was a seeking after effect, an aim to make the reader wince and shudder at the bloody aspect of the thing. There was George Borrow's picture of the fight with the Flaming Tinman. There was Victor Hugo's memorable chapter in "L'Homme Qui Rit", entitled "England, Ireland and Scotland". "Red ruin" is inadequate in telling of the plight of the ponderous Irish giant slashed hither and thither by the scientific, well-conditioned, steel-muscled Scotchman, finally subjected to the fearful punishment of chancery and, when released, showing what was no longer a face, but "a huge sponge, soaked in blood". Yet this swaying horror was the victor at the moment, for as the flaillike arm had been swinging to and fro, beating his countenance out of all semblance to that of

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a human being, he himself had vitally repaid the foul blow that he had received earlier in the battle. Englishmen classed Hugo's description of the ring struggle with his selection of "Tom Jim Jack" as the name of a British character in another book. Both ridiculous. But many a reader able to bear in print Hazlitt's description of the conflict between the Gasman and the Bull winces and winces again as Scotland fights Ireland and England looks stolidly on.

Hundreds of thousands of readers have made the acquaintance of the fight between Cuff and Dobbin in an early chapter of "Vanity Fair", and the one between Tom Brown and "Slogger" Williams in Thomas Hughes's "Tom Brown at Rugby". These schoolboy battles are good reading and point effectually the moral for which they were designed. But probably no fight in fiction has been quite

so widely read (though the impression that it made was comparatively lost among the many more dramatic episodes of the book) as the short and fatally decisive encounter in the Palace of Idernee between Ben Hur, just after the famous chariot race, and the follower of Thord the Northman, hired as a weapon of vengeance by the defeated, ruined, and maimed Messala. It was a one-blow battle. Ben Hur feinted, caught the stranger's left arm, and struck behind the ear. The dead man was buried in Ben Hur's garments, and Thord the Northman opened a wine shop near the Circus Maximus in Rome.

"Ivanhoe" had something of a fist fight, where, after the fall of the Castle of Torquilstone, the Black Knight and Friar Tuck exchanged buffets on the sward at the edge of the forest, the King standing firm and repaying the blow with such good will that the fat ecclesiastic rolled heels over head with a broken jaw which, however, in no wise interfered with his appetite. But that amiable display of fisticuffs can hardly be regarded as belonging to the realm of the ring proper, any more than can the struggle in Sienkiewicz's "Quo Vadis", which resulted in the giant Ursus emerging from the shadow with a writhing, broken-bodied thing flung across his shoulder.

George Bernard Shaw's Cashel Byron is unquestionably the first prominent modern pugilist of fiction. But characteristically Shavian is the fact that the profession of the hero of "Cashel Byron's Profession" has really little or nothing to do with the matter. The boxing match between Cashel and Billy Paradise is simply an episode and a spectacle, just as the ring battle in George Meredith's "An Amazing Marriage" is an episode and a spectacle. In both cases the fight is secondary; what counts and what the authors meant to count are the varied emotions stirring in certain persons at the ringside. It is the age-old war of the sexes that is being waged; not a glove combat within a roped square. It is the point of view of the onlooking heroine that was emphasized in "An Amazing Marriage" and "Cashel Byron's Profession", as it was later to

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be emphasized in such books as Jack London's "The Game", and Samuel Merwin's "The Honey Bee".

Again, in Hugh Walpole's "Fortitude" it is less the fight itself than the effect of the battle upon the mind and sensibilities of a high-strung spectator. Peering between the legs of a big fisherman, little Peter Westcott witnesses the struggle in the top room of the Bending Mule of Treliss between Stephen Brant and the man with the shining chest. And, in spirit fighting with his hero Stephen, Peter, his small body quivering in an ecstasy of agony, follows, by means of occasional glimpses, the sway of the bloody combat, until the moment when Stephen, emerging from the shadows of apparently certain defeat, crashes through the terrible blow that reduces his opponent to insensibility. The secret of the effect achieved by Walpole lies in Peter's disadvantageous position for observation. It is not what the boy sees, but what is happening that he does not see, that causes the reader to shudder and wince.

Conceding, in the romance dealing with the ring, first place to Conan Doyle's "Rodney Stone" by virtue of its all-round qualities as a story, it is to the Americans of the last decade that we must turn for the figure of the fighting man in all his graphic vigor. We may go back to Richard Harding Davis's first story, "Gallegher", for the ring flavor of the late 'eighties, dividing, as did the little newspaper office boy of the tale, attention between the furtive battle on the barn floor, and the gloved murderer in the loft. But for the jargon and practice of the ring of today and recent yesterday, one turns to such writers as Jack London, Charles E. Van Loan, Will Levington Comfort, and Samuel Merwin.

Among the vast number of stories

that came from the pen of Jack London three are compact of the prize ring: "The Game", "The Mexican", and "The Abysmal Brute". "The Game" is Greek tragedy, almost unnecessarily cruel. There was so much in those vigorous young lives that the reader was inclined to toss to the winds the logical conclusion that was sounded in the very first note, and to rebel at the manner in which the author brought the chance blow at the moment of victory and the crushed skull. That story needed a revised ending far more than did Kipling's "The Light That Failed". Ponta should have gone down to defeat and Joe emerged victor from his last fight. Of all the battles of fiction none is waged with a finer motive than that in Jack London's "The Mexican". There is a great soul in the little Riviera, the light of a pure patriotism burns in blazing visions. His eyes are blind to the hostile faces about the ringside and the leering, contemptuous opponent in the opposite corner. They see the wan faces of starving children and the guns that are to carry the revolution to victory. It is for such things that he fights his foe and all the conceivable trickery of the game. It is for the revolution that he suffers and conquers.

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Miss Lowell

PERHAPS Amy Lowell never cares to repeat a performance; yet a second volume of "Legends" (Houghton Mifflin) seems inevitable. These eleven dramatic tales are so brilliantly successful that we can only hope for more of their kind. Here is a canvas broad enough for the strokes of that untiring brush! Now she paints with the fine lines of a worker on Chinese porcelains:

> Chasing crimson butterflies with faint silk fans,
> On the slim teapots of young bamboo.

Now she dips into the macabre palette of a William Blake as

> The skeleton mounts like a great grey ape, and its bones rattle; the rattle of the bones is the crack of dead trees bitten by frost. The wind is desolate and the sea moans.

Or paints as vivid a picture of a storm coming down across New England as has ever been produced—more than painting, more than description. You can feel the taut air, see the clouds, hear the storm:

> The sky is lowering and black, a strange blue-blackness, which makes red houses pink, and green leaves purple. Over the flowing purple trees, the sky is an iron-blue, split with forks of straw-yellow. The thunder breaks out of the sky with a crash, and rumbles away in a long, hoarse drag of sound. The river is the blue of Concord grapes, with steel points and oblongs, down the bridge; up stream, it is pale and even, a solid line of unpolished zinc.

This ability of Miss Lowell's to create a variety of emotions simultaneously seems to me never to have been so apparent as in this volume. Perhaps it is because she has discovered in these folk stories a medium peculiarly grateful; but I'm inclined to think it simply a growing mastery of rhythm and color, along with unflagging vitality and an extraordinary faculty for the choice of the individual word for its sound value. But these are not only poems of sense appeal. They are finely cerebrated. Nine of them are so vividly dramatic that the effect on my mind is as clear-cut and as memorable as if they were etched there. "Memorandum Confided by a Yucca to a Passion Vine" and "A Legend of Porcelain", while they are filled with emotion, color, and rich sound, do not, for me, produce the same feeling of satisfaction as do the others. "Many Swans" has the cosmic terror, the delicate humor, the great loneliness, and the exquisite symbolism of the American Indian, mixed with a human understanding that makes this legend distinctly Miss Lowell's. In poetry, I can think of no one who has so well interpreted the myths of the Indians. Chief Blackbird's funeral song is not a thing to be read. It forces itself into sound, and should be shouted from a hillside, out across a valley toward sunset. "Before the Storm", besides being a powerful descriptive poem, is one of the best ghost stories I have ever read.

Both in subject-matter and in technique Miss Lowell has surpassed herself in these legends; for she ranges from the tender to the passionate, from the dainty to the horrible, in rhythms to suit her needs—now the swinging ballad, now polyphonic prose. She proves herself again, not only the poet of rich fancy, stinging imagery, kaleidoscopic color, and astoundingly beautiful rhythms; but the successful raconteur—a good New Englander, an accomplished spinner of yarns.

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Mr. Tarkington

ALICE ADAMS" (Doubleday) is a novel that taxes the vocabulary of praise. Mr. Tarkington's finest, certainly does not say enough. Perhaps I can best express the matter by putting it this way: Mr. Tarkington seems to me, in this picture of family life in an American city, to have outplayed the year's crop of realists at every stroke. This is a well-considered realism, a balanced healthy vision, a sense of humor and tragedy skilfully interplaying. Alice is the clever, pretty daughter of a middle-aged failure of a father and a mother neurotically aware of her husband's shortcomings. Alice plays the game for existence and a husband in the social life of a city which is beginning to look askance at the shabbiness of her family's residence, and to flutter at the oddities of her young brother Walter who, unable to go to college, finds solace in the vagaries of crap-shooting negroes. The character drawing is simple and objective, the dialogue superb. Tarkington himself never steps into the picture to cavil at his characters. And he has kept out of this novel the subtle sentimentality that I have sometimes felt in others of his stories. Here the people are petty, cruel, mediocre, lovable. Take them or leave them; and if you chance to discover yourself, perhaps you will color a little and turn the pages more rapidly.

The thread of the story is an interesting one, without ever becoming obviously plotted. True, Walter absconds with funds from his father's onetime employer; but he does not return with diamonds from East Africa to play the prodigal at a happy ending. This Walter is cruelly true to type. He is absurd, awkward, pitifully goaded on to disaster by family blindness. Virgil Adams, the father, can be found in the cogs of any great business organization. He is the trusted employee who has been a factor in building up the concern and has allowed himself to be crushed by the more avidly successful, only to attempt revolt too late. He is one of the eternally meek, who are said to be about to inherit the earth! Totally ineffectual. Mrs. Adams, peevish, weighed down by struggles to make limited financial means keep pace with enforced respectability, is continually inviting trouble by the precipitation of that middle-class bugbear, the family row.

This is a book of small events massed to tragedies and saved finally by the sudden development of the woman from the girl Alice Adams. There were moments in "The Magnificent Ambersons" which gave us the real Tarkington; but in "Alice Adams" he seems to me to have written what is a great and an enduring picture of a slice of American life in the present generation. It is the third of his series of novels of middle-western affairs. If the next one takes such another leap ahead as did "The Magnificent Ambersons" over "The Turmoil", and as now in turn does "Alice Adams", there is no reason why Mr. Tarkington should not be recorded as the most faithful portrayer of American life as our generation has lived it; for, after all, it has been a generation which has seen life as Mr. Tarkington writes of it. Where others photograph, or penetrate with satirical intent, he sees around. "Alice Adams" is the sort of novel that Henry G. Aikman may write when he is as old as Mr. Tarkington.

—*J. F.*

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

A VIOLIN MASTER'S CONTRIBUTION

By Albert Spalding

WITHIN the covers of a volume of some two hundred and twenty-five pages Professor Leopold Auer has made the most important literary contribution to the violin world that I can recall. It is the worthy fruit of this great master's long and distinguished career, and its appearance today is most opportune.

The work is concisely presented in a simple and unpretentious style. Every page carries its lesson, every anecdote its application: it is the last word as a textbook on violin technique. But it is more than this, for Professor Auer has succeeded—where so many have failed—in making his book readable, even entertaining. It can be perused with profit not only by the violin student and teacher, but also by the musical layman. Personal experiences and anecdotes of more than half a century rich with great memories, color the pages. No music lover can fail to feel his pulses quicken at the simple but eloquent drawing of such portraits as Joachim, Wieniawski, and Vieuxtemps. The pages devoted to that period of Auer's life spent at Hanover studying with Joachim, are particularly interesting. The following picture, so modestly presented, is an example in point:

> At the first lesson Joachim gave me I played Spohr's Concerto, the "Vocal Scene", for him, and I think my intonation was dubious; he told me as much, criticising my style as well, and advising me to pay more careful attention to it. Then, in order to test me at the following lesson—our lesson time was never fixed in advance—he gave me Rode's third étude, in the second position, to prepare. We hardly ever played any scales or études for him during the lesson, with the simple exception of some of the Paganini Caprices. Anything which had to do with the technique of the two hands we were supposed to attend to at home....Throughout the lesson he kept his violin and bow in his hands, and whenever he was dissatisfied with the way the student played the passage or a musical phrase, the master would draw his bow and play the passage or phrase in question himself in a manner truly divine.

This is an experience which the young Auer never forgot. And the magic of his name as a teacher is due, in large part, to a power all *too rare* in teachers: the power of demonstrating in a superlative manner on his instrument what he has already explained orally.

We in this country at least know Professor Auer chiefly as the master of such famous virtuosi as Heifetz, Zimbalist, Elman, and Parlow. What we do not sufficiently realize is the fact that he was one of the supreme violinists of his age. I can recall his performance several years ago, in Petrograd, of the Beethoven Concerto. In nobility of style and eloquent utterance it more nearly approached Joachim's playing than that of any other artist before the public. The present volume is as much a result of Auer the interpreter as it is of Auer the teacher. The chapters dealing separately with each technical detail, progress in logical sequence; violin teacher and student alike will find the correct answer and remedy to many a painful problem. Hints on Bowing will prove especially valuable. Another chapter which should be read and reread is the one on How to Practise—everything in these three words. The question is not, "How much do you practise?" but, "How do you practise?" Let us

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consider for a moment what Professor Auer says on this vital subject:

> ...the main essential is for him [the student] to cultivate the habit of close self-observation, and above all to accustom himself to direct and control his efforts. For it is this mental labor which is the true source of all progress. The young student is prone to allow himself to be carried away by the impulse to execute a passage in a precipite tempo, intoxicating himself with the sheer pleasure of his own digital dexterity. This makes it impossible for him to follow each note with his ear, to hear the intonation of what he is playing.

Especially true is this of players gifted with a natural facility. Place ten talented violinists in different rooms with the understanding that they are to practise a certain piece to be performed an hour afterward. Unknown to them, listen to each in turn. What will be the probable result?—you will hear certain passages played over and over again at top speed—and frequently at a greater velocity than the piece itself requires (owing to the fact that they have not the steadying rhythm of an accompaniment). And with each repetition the initial error of intonation or lack of rhythmic accent increases instead of being corrected. Ask one of these ten how the work in question should be practised and he will blandly tell you, "Very slowly and carefully until you have perfect control over all the technical details." He says this, believes this, knows this; but when it comes to putting it in practice, human nature and the eternal ego step in—he cranks his car and starts downhill at fourth speed believing a miracle will happen. Well! Such miracles do not happen; things generally end in a pretty bad smash.

Professor Auer has done a great service to the violin world. Every technical and tonal detail is presented with loving care and devotion, nor has he neglected the more subtle and elusive qualities of the artist such as Style, Nuance, and The Soul of Interpretation. He gives also some practical hints on Repertory. Everyone interested in violin playing will be eternally grateful to him for the perfect performance of so difficult and necessary a work.

Violin Playing As I Teach It. By Leopold Auer. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

AN ENFANT TERRIBLE AT FIFTY

By Hulbert Footner

WHEN "Dodo" appeared in 1893 I was just of an age to begin to take notice of the talk of grownups. I well remember the sensation the novel created in respectable Church of England circles. Among novels it must have been the first of the violent reactions from Victorianism; the first of the *chroniques scandaleuses* which have since become our daily fare. The book was bad enough in itself, I heard them say, but that it should have been written by a son of the Archbishop of Canterbury was an incredible phenomenon! Yet come to think of it, how natural! Were not the children of the high priest of Victorianism among its chief sufferers?

Times have changed since 1893 and I suspect that "Dodo" would seem mild enough now. I never read it, because of course it was carefully guarded from minors in those days, and it has never come my way since. Certainly there is nothing very shocking in its author's present account of himself and his distinguished family. To be sure he tells how he heard the revered archbishop boast that none of his sons smoked the filthy weed when he knew very well that all three fumed like

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chimneys; "Fred" tells too, how the archbishop's wife (who was more human than Victorian anyhow) when suffering from a headache begged a cigarette from her son, and failing that, contentedly puffed at an ancient and evil-smelling cutty pipe. But that is the worst. If Fred Benson ever was the *enfant terrible* of the Episcopalians the years have chastened him. There is little in common between this book and the confessions of the author's friend and contemporary Margot Asquith.

"Our Family Affairs" is a delightful book but its charms are of the quieter sort, arising from sensitiveness, kindliness, and a playful humor. It does not batter one. It does not exactly fit into any of the usual categories of biography. The son of the Archbishop of Canterbury (the greatest man in England after the Prime Minister) is singularly unimpressed by eminent persons. There is a vivid sketch of Gladstone, another of Robert Browning. Tennyson failed to coruscate at Lambeth Palace because he wasn't allowed to smoke. One is sorry that for reasons of discretion perhaps, our author steers clear of British royalty. He has a bit of fun with the Greek variety. He spends his most loving pains upon the people unknown to the world, who most interested him. This is as it should be. The vignettes of several Cambridge worthies—J. E. Nixon "whose mind was like a cage-full of monkeys all intent upon some delirious and unintelligible business" and Oscar Browning, "O.B." playing Schumann on his "oboephone"—are little gems of affectionate humor.

One opens the book full of curiosity to read of a family that produced so many and such varied eminences. One is well repaid—but differently. For the main fact which emerges is not the unusualness of the Bensons but their perfectly delightful usualness. Such a jolly, affectionate, unsentimental lot! What good times they had playing "sieges" and "Pirates"; collecting birds' eggs and butterflies. The famous father was rather an awful figure to his children, and his portrait is on this account a little blurred. But the mother (and such a mother) is drawn full length with the loving particularity of a Holbein. Only second to the mother is Beth, the old nurse. One wishes there were more about Beth. Her photograph embellishes the volume; servant or no, a lovely and dignified old lady.

The principal figure in "Our Family Affairs" is inevitably that member of the family who wrote the book. Several photographs of young Fred are included in the volume. They depict an attractive lad with dreamy eyes, mocking lips—and muscular shoulders. Photographs and story coordinate beautifully. Young Fred was ever a seeker of beauty, particularly the serene and smiling beauty of old Greece. "I loved the children of the sun," he says, speaking of his schoolmates, "and the friends of wind and rain." He becomes rapturous in his praise of an old forest, and of the high Alps. Yet this dreamy boy was also captain of his school Rugby fifteen. No man has ever written more eloquently of the romantic, even passionate friendships of boyhood. It is the best part of the book.

> For what man is there, surrounded though he be with the love of wife and children, who does not retain a memory of the romantic affection of boys for each other? Having felt it, he could scarcely have forgotten it, and if he never felt it he missed one of the most golden of the prizes of youth, unrecapturable in mature life.

Here is the scene of his parting from the best friend of all when Fred left school:

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...we lay on the grass and chewed the sweet ends of it, and when not silent talked of perfectly trivial things. And at last the friend rolled over on to his face and said:

"Oh damn!"

"Why?" *I asked, knowing quite well.*

"Because it will be awful rot without you."

"You'll soon find somebody else," said I.

"Funny!" said he.

"Laugh then," said I.

He sat up, nursing his knees in his arms, and looking down over the field....Then his eyes came back from their excursion.

"It's been ripping anyhow," he said. "Did two fellows ever have such a good time?"...

"Never. Nor will. And there's the chapel bell. Get up."

He stood up and picked the grass seeds from his clothes.

"Psalms this morning," he said telegraphically.

"I know. 'Brethren and companions' sake.' Didn't think you had noticed."

"Rather. Good old Psalm."

I took up the cricket bag and he pulled at it to carry it. A handle came off.

"Ass," said I.

"Well, it was three quarters off already," said he. "Come on; we shall be late. You can leave it at the porter's lodge."

"Oh may I really? Thanks awfully," said I.

"Sarc," said he.

Our Family Affairs. By E. F. Benson. George H. Doran Company.

EVE FACES TEMPTATION

By Mary K. Ford

"THE Brimming Cup" by Dorothy Canfield is one of those books, becoming increasingly common, which, like "The Book of Susan", deals with a woman's inner life, her emotions and her spiritual struggles.

In a prologue we have the keynote of the story. Two young people, just engaged, are seated on a rock on the edge of the Roman Campagna, talking about their future life, and it is the woman who, "a little overballasted with brains and sensitiveness and underballasted with experience" as her lover puts it, hesitating before the happiness that awaits her, a little doubtful as to its permanency, pins her faith upon truth, tells her lover that, no matter what it may cost them personally, they must be true to the best that is in them.

The story then skips some dozen years and opens in a small village in Vermont where these young people, Neale and Marise Crittenden, have been living since their marriage. Crittenden has a small mill which turns out articles like brush-backs and shovel-handles, and which gives steady employment to a limited number of men. They are an interesting pair. Marise, sensitive, artistic, and alluring in her full maturity; Neale, upright, appreciative, and full of the strong common sense that makes him a power in the little community as well as a tower of strength to his wife. There are three children, the youngest of whom is just beginning school; the cares incident upon infancy are over and Marise has now more time to herself.

Into this Eden comes the serpent in the shape of a man of the world, brilliant, of magnetic personality, and thoroughly and entirely selfish. Marise responds at once to Vincent Marsh's charm, enjoys his conversation and soon finds herself falling under his spell. She begins to wonder if the life she has been leading, with its round of homely duties, has not been stultifying to her higher nature. Is not her love for her children merely a form of egotism? Is not her growing indifference to dress a sign of mental dry rot? These are the questions and doubts which her intercourse with Marsh has aroused within her, and with them comes, most subtle of all, a feeling that perhaps she does not care quite so much for Neale as she once did and that he is growing indifferent to her.

Her husband is not blind to the

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change in her; he sees her danger but he knows that if there is any victory to be obtained she must gain it for herself or it will be useless. Things are in this stage when the crisis comes and Vincent Marsh speaks. Here Marise reaps the reward of her habit of mental integrity; she looks the situation full in the face and without any paltering or concealment, deals honestly with it.

The author has never done anything more convincing than her analysis of Marise's feelings at this juncture. As her youngest child outgrew the need for her constant physical care there had come to her "a peremptory call back to personal and physical youth and excitement". Vincent had harped perpetually upon the fact "that there were lives so arranged that other people did all the drudgery, leaving them free to enjoy an existence made perfect by the ability and opportunity for the enjoyment of the higher things". On looking at such lives did she notice any keener sense of beauty on their part? Were they more deeply alive on account of their ease? Could she be happy in feeling that other people bore her share of the drudgery of life? But she still feels that Vincent Marsh can give her something that Neale cannot, and with unsparing honesty sets herself to find out what it is. It is not expansion of the soul, it is physical excitement.

It would take too long to follow out every line of reasoning that Marise enters upon in her desire to decide upon her course of action. To the writer the one weak point of the book is the fact that a woman like Marise could have contemplated leaving her husband and children for another man; but the whole story hinges upon that situation, therefore it must be compassed in some way. Be that as it may, the right decision is reached and with the departure of Vincent Marise regains her balance and her happiness.

The book may fairly be compared with "Main Street". Each describes life in a small community; in each the chief character is a woman whose feelings and emotions form the theme of the story; but here the resemblance ceases. There is even more wrongdoing in the Vermont village than in the Minnesota town, for Ashley has a dark story of jealousy and murder to its credit. But the fairer side of life is emphasized in Dorothy Canfield's book, whereas its omission by Mr. Lewis falsifies a story true in detail.

The Brimming Cup. By Dorothy Canfield. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

HUMANIZING OUR CIVILIZATION

By Harold E. Stearns

THE whole method and temper of approach to social psychology and that heretofore too nebulous science, sociology, has been fundamentally altered by the work of Graham Wallas. His influence on contemporary thought has been subtle, pervasive, and revolutionary; and practically every thinker on political and social problems is under heavy obligations to him. Often this obligation is unrecognized, especially in this country where popularizers spread the butter of his thought on the bread of journalism and where he himself is not read as widely as he deserves to be; but in England it is acknowledged warmly and gratefully by almost every serious worker in the intellectual field. Three books constitute the essence of his contribution: "Human Nature In Politics", "The Great Society", and the

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present volume, "Our Social Heritage", the maturest and wisest of them all, if not the most original and striking. To obtain a clear concept of the inner consistency and unity of attack animating them all, they should be read in their chronological order. All have a cultural and scholarly background of incomparable depth and richness; all possess a liberating historical insight; all furnish a corrective for loose thinking and vagueness of phrase. Of very few books indeed, and of a mere handful of sets of books by a single man, can the cliché, that not to read them is to remain not fully educated, be applied with any measure of justness. It is a criterion of the suppleness and integrity of Mr. Wallas's mind that in this instance such judgment can fearlessly be given.

"Human Nature In Politics", the most revolutionary of his books, was an exposure of the rigidity of the older—Victorian—notions of human nature and a clear depiction of the small part played by reason, as compared with subconscious inference, impulse, and irrational symbolizing, in the actual working of social and political institutions. Broadly, it was a merciless attack upon the inflexible "intellectualism" of the older political theorists, and a necessarily sharp reminder of the fact that human nature, as careful psychological analysis objectively showed it to be, and not *a priori* dogmas was the determining factor both in the creation and daily functioning of political institutions. By the time "The Great Society" was published—a few weeks before the outbreak of the war in 1914, a war, incidentally, which the book to all practical intents prophesied—it might be said that, on the whole, Mr. Wallas's first attack had succeeded too well. At all events the pendulum of thought had swung the other way—anti-intellectualism of the Bergsonian variety, discrediting of the reason as a mere instrument, were in full cry. Actually, of course, this tendency was a misunderstanding of Mr. Wallas's deeper point of view, and as he himself said in his preface, "The Great Society" was a protest against the current anti-intellectualism of contemporary thought. Perhaps his most fruitful contribution in this book was his manner of putting the disposition to think on the same plane of discourse as the disposition to love and hate. "Intelligence", said he, "is not a subordinate 'apparatus' set in action by Instinct; and the tendency so to treat it constitutes a real social danger.... Curiosity, Trial and Error, Thought and Language are intelligent dispositions acting as 'naturally' as any of the instincts." Reason was thus restored to its high position, without sacrificing any of the realistic criticism. Not merely was the book a successful protest against the current scepticism before the intellect, but it put the sceptics on the defensive.

In "Our Social Heritage" Mr. Wallas has deepened and sharpened the protest of his previous book. Starting from the simple contention that the natural impulses of man have not changed since the period when he emerged from the jungle and formed a language, Mr. Wallas shows how he has adapted himself to the increasingly complex social environment of modern industrialism and internationalism by the alternate learning and teaching of the knowledge and methods embodied in the social heritage which every generation learns from the previous and hands on, enlarged and modified, to the next. Without this social heritage—if it should suddenly

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be taken away and we should revert to the state of primitive man—

> nine tenths of the inhabitants of London or New York would be dead in a month, and 99 per cent of the remaining tenth would be dead in six months. They would have no language to express their thoughts, and no thoughts but vague reverie. They could not read notices, or drive motors or horses. They would wander about, led by the inarticulate cries of a few naturally dominant individuals, drowning themselves, as thirst came on, in hundreds at the riverside landing places, looting those shops where the smell of decaying food attracted them, and perhaps at the end stumbling on the expedient of cannibalism.

By what means has this social heritage been learned and gradually developed? There can be only one answer: by the conscious application of reason and thought to the problems it attempts to meet. Hence the book becomes an eloquent and irresistible appeal to examine all features of this social heritage consciously and rationally, to devise methods for making it meet more adequately the primary needs of men, to enlarge and modify it, whether expressed in ancient political and social and religious institutions or in the disciplines of science and learning, to fit the needs of reality. Such examination of our social heritage will reveal (1), that it cannot expect to bear the strain of human desire, unless a greater degree of material equality, economic democracy if you like, is speedily substituted for the present inequalities, and (2), that the individual and the community, the community and the state, the state and the world state, are interdependent and cannot successfully live isolated.

These contentions perhaps sound commonplace in themselves. But Mr. Wallas is primarily a psychologist, and when he applies his analysis to actual institutions, asking directly how far they further or subvert these two primary needs for a human civilization, the results are startling. For example, nothing could be more revelatory of the way in which a respected institution threatens to destroy civilization, than is his examination of the church, particularly that element in it which hopes to increase its power by appealing to those vestigial mysticisms in all of us which our social heritage has taught us to avoid in other fields. Here Mr. Wallas is on firm ground. A religion not founded first of all upon intellectual integrity, he says in substance, may temporarily increase its proselytes but it is ultimately inviting destruction. Similarly, in his attack on the monarchial system—even the limited monarchy of Great Britain—it is the possibility of exploitation in mystical terms which makes his criticism. Again, the guild system, as advocated in particular by Messrs. Tawney and Cole, he rejects on the ground that vocationalism always develops hostility to change and tends to become something in the nature of a vested interest, which he illustrates brilliantly in his discussion of the professionalism of the law, medicine, and teaching in Great Britain. The military profession, of course, constitutes the greatest danger from this point of view, and again his illustrations, drawn from the blunders of the British Dardanelles and Mesopotamia Commissions, are critical masterpieces. The way out, he says as a kind of undercurrent to the whole discussion, lies in rigorous and fearless intellectual examination of all features of our social heritage, and criticism and modification of them to bring about the ultimate end, the good life.

Which leads me to the final point. Reservations about Mr. Wallas's work have been made on two grounds, both of which I believe mistaken: first, that he is critical but not constructive; that, for instance, in showing

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how the community at large and not the teachers should have final control over what is taught, he fails to show how far that autonomy should extend and at what point the central authority should be exerted. Second, that because of the essential nominalistic quality of Mr. Wallas's mind, he is interested not so much in institutions as in the quality of people who make them what they are, thus missing the noumenon of the thing in itself and failing to have a central conception in terms of which these institutions—as distinguished from the frail creatures that make them—can be evaluated. On the first point, constructiveness as applied to institutions is rather grotesque. All institutions have grown up from human needs and impulses; it is enough to show wherein they fail to meet these deeper needs and impulses, which only an examination of their human origins will reveal. This Mr. Wallas does. On the second point, the complaint that he is not constructive (of the first) will be valid only if the second is true. For if he has a central outlook, that will automatically act not only as a point of evaluation, but as a measure by which the constructiveness of specific proposals may be judged. Now as a matter of fact, it is incomprehensible how any intelligent person can read through all his books and not see that central point of view. It is fundamentally Greek, the concept of the good life, the life of order and measure and harmony among the conflicting claims of the restless human spirit. It is the concept of happiness by wise fulfilment. It furnishes a standard by which the achievements of all institutions may be—perhaps not accurately in a quantitative sense but unforgetably in a qualitative sense—measured. It is not explicitly set forth as a charted Utopia; it takes the world as it is, trying patiently and fairly to see how the social heritage now existing may be warped more and more like a boat to its own landing. It is not a question of realizing wherein institutions, as they exist, are evil. It is the more fundamental understanding of realizing that institutions were made for men, and not men for institutions.

Our Social Heritage. By Graham Wallas. Yale University Press.

A WOMAN'S BURDEN

By Clement Wood

IT is the voice of women" that sings within these verses; and the burden rings with the bleeding poignancy of ancient fresh sorrows and a burning realization of the beauty of love and all life. The poems are modern in one essential particular of attitude: they are the word of a singer who faces life honestly, with the veils withdrawn and the pretty lies eliminated. They are modern, too, in technique; a surprising fluidity marks the singing, a winnowing of the best of the new methods, without the harrowing crudities and extremities of most of the raucous bards of today. They are ancient, in that the woman's attitude, after the curtains are parted, might have been Helen's, or Eve's. This is, perhaps, another mark of verity.

Pan, blow your pipes and I will be,
Your fern, your pool, your dream, your tree!...
Your wood, your nymph, your kiss, your rhyme,
And all your godlike summer-time!

she sings; and the moods begin with nature drawing as exquisitely visioned and artistically modulated as "Squall". In "Rendezvous" the lovely opening,

But one month more and I shall be
Wrapt in a shadowed harmony
Of leaves and buds and crinkly moss;
Above me tangled boughs will toss,

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ends in a saccharinic refrain; but how the whole poem would have been treasured in a thousand scrapbooks and anthologies! This nature note mounts in "After" to sheer human ecstasy; although over the piercing clarity of sky, the shadowy clouds of fear and pain hover. In pure lyric beauty few of her verses excel that jeweled love song, "The Hour". The note of love lifts the commonplace "The Extra Hour" to an exquisite height; and the peak is reached in the emotional loveliness of "Two On a Hill". Love is at noon; and in the golden sunshine "When Baba Dives" and the pulsing rapture of "The Queen-Bee Flies" appear and remain. The note grows more sophisticated in the cloudy beauty of "The Chinese Tapestry". She sings,

If I could sing but the song of love,
Fill my throat with each sounding note,
Others might kiss and clasp and cling,
Mine be the lips that would sing, would sing!

but this is no cloistered, academic voice that utters the authentic message of love. With startling suddenness she admits the personal note.

There is a majestic externalization in "Sekhmet the Lion-Headed", the most striking of the Egyptian pieces; but the piercing individual note will not be still. "A Crabbed Song of Spring" reveals the soul sickness. The poet says,

Spring, sitting there in your green cloak,
You are a gray-haired woman,
You are as old as I,
As sad,
As tired!

"Judgment Day" is a lighter treatment of the same ache. "The Ego Cries Itself" seeks in an avataric pan-identification a mystical way out of the pain; but in lines that grip and rend, the splendid sonnet "The Ladder" fixes eternally the woman's agony, and her glory in it.

I had a sudden vision in the night—
I did not sleep, I dare not say I dreamed—
Beside my bed a pallid ladder gleamed
And lifted upward to the sky's dim height:
And every rung shone strangely in that light,
And every rung a woman's body seemed,
Outstretched, and down the sides her long hair streamed,
And you—you climbed that ladder of delight!

You climbed, sure-footed, naked rung by rung,
Clasped them and trod them, called them by their name,
And my name too I heard you speak at last;
You stood upon my breast the while and flung
A hand up to the next! And then—oh shame—
I kissed the foot that bruised me as it passed.

Here is a strange, sincere, and beautiful voice, revealing what the heart has long hidden. James Oppenheim has sought the same sincerity; but his gauche polyrhythms remove him from comparison with these exquisite songs. Deeper into herself and womanhood she has gone, and will go. When she has reached the centre she may stop, sure of the high name for the high achievement. Or she may look outward again, as at first: and this we hope for, and await.

A Canopic Jar. By Leonora Speyer. E. P. Dutton and Co.

THE VALUE OF THE RESTRAINED

By Peggy Baird

LITERATURE has never been kind to the Nobodies of this world: these millions who have such perfectly set lives. One sees them in the subways twice a day, moving toward the offices of somebody or other in the morning, and at night toward the home in Flatbush or the Bronx. They start their day, one imagines, with the alarm clock, the swift breakfast of overdone or underdone eggs, and a hurried automatic kiss. Meanwhile they receive attention only in the newspa-

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pers of Mr. Hearst and Mr. Harmsworth; their lives are too well ordered for the outsider to enter into them, impinging only on the lives of the other Nobodies.

It is precisely because they are so out of touch with somebody or other that a whole volume describing accurately a Nobody may be taken as a screaming farce. This is the book that George and Weedon Grossmith wrote and illustrated; they probably did not even exaggerate the laughable dulness of the lives they depicted. Evidently their portraits were true enough to amuse the English public, for "The Diary of a Nobody" went through many editions in London. In America, however, it has been published for the first time this year.

Its authors for many years were favorites on the English stage, and yet they had not set out to make either acting or literature their profession. George Grossmith (Gee Gee) began as a reporter on a big London daily. His brother Weedon (Wee Gee) studied for years in an art school; otherwise he could never have drawn the caricatures of Charles Pooter and his faithful Carry. They must have paid more attention to character than to either art or reporting, for their book is a fund of mellow and delightful humor and keen psychology, with only the faintest seasoning of malice.

The humor with which they describe the family life of Charles Pooter is purely English; it depends on understatement rather than on the overstatement which accentuates our transatlantic mirth. Here is a specific instance from the Diary, written by the Nobody in question:

April 18. An extraordinary coincidence: Carry had called in a woman to make some chintz covers for our drawing room chairs and sofa to prevent the sun fading the green rep of our furniture. I saw the woman, and recognized her as a woman who used to work for my old aunt at Clapham. It only shows how small the world is.

At times Mr. Pooter makes a joke, and once he even becomes extremely radical. One can easily see why Carry did not approve of him on the latter occasion, for he says:

On the way home in the carriage, for the first time in my life, I was inclined to indulge in the radical thought that money was not properly divided.

Although Carry did not, and could not, concur in this terrifying thought, she as a rule greatly appreciated his humor. Pooter had two friends, called Gowings and Cummings. One night in their presence he thought of a joke:

I said: "A very extraordinary thing has just occurred to me." "Something funny as usual," said Cummings. "Yes," I replied. "And I think both of you will say so this time. It concerns you both; for doesn't it seem funny that Gowings is always coming and Cummings always going?"

They didn't think it was very funny, although Carry went into fits of laughter.

Indeed Carry almost always appreciated her husband's jokes. She was a good wife and a good mother to her son Lupin, and they got along very well as a family, except for the little tiffs over the morning eggs. It is all very ordinary and extremely amusing. On the other hand there is a question as to just how much it will be appreciated in America. We have the habit of demanding some accessory with our humor: burnt cork or custard pies or a tremulous mustache; these are extras for which we believe we pay. But in the demand and receipt of this extra luxury, we are apt to lose every form of subtlety, and it is just this subtlety and restraint that is the fundamental of real humor.

The Diary of a Nobody. By George and Weedon Grossmith. Alfred A. Knopf.

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BRIEF REVIEWS OF RECENT FICTION

DUST" by Mr. and Mrs. E. Haldeman-Julius (Brentano) is in line with many of the newer novels, headed by the redoubtable "Main Street", which depict the drabness of life in the middle west. It is a story of a farm on the Kansas plains—and a dreary one it is—, of a hard, successful farmer and his soft, overpowered wife. The book has not the value of "Main Street" as a social study, since the characters can hardly be accepted as typical. But for that very reason it gains something in humanity and becomes vital by the undeniable suggestion of individuality. Both man and wife are drawn with considerable skill, especially the latter who, in her frustrated tenderness, helplessness, and generous vision, is curiously appealing. The magnificent flourishing farm, which exacts incredible toil, begins in dust and in dust it ends, with its master who loved it and naught else, part of that dust. And the woman, broken by sorrow and labor, finds peace in the town far from the sight of it. Uneven, somewhat inadequate the book may be, but it has its better parts and excellent they are.

The Far East, a Manchu maiden, the spoiled son of a western millionaire, a desperate adventuress, and a giant American exile, are some of the ingredients of "In Red and Gold" (Bobbs-Merrill). To say that it is skilfully and competently written would be to say only what readers of Samuel Merwin have come to expect as a matter of course. China, with the cloud of rebellion over the country and aliens in her midst, forms the background. The author has a sympathetic understanding of the centuries of civilization standing back of the great empire which, blandly smiling, has watched other more impatient nations, arrogant in their moments, rise, fall, and disappear. Familiar to followers of Mr. Merwin's previous novels, Griggsby Doane, huge in physique with character to match, dominates the book. How he eventually wins through to happiness, and of the lovely princess Hui Fei, it would be invidious to tell here. A good story for all who like romance and adventure undiluted.

"It is my opinion that one pulsebeat of life is worth all your chastity of form." So speaks Lilly Becker, the heroine of Fannie Hurst's first novel, and in that credo are found the strength and limitations of the author's work. "Star Dust" (Harper) is not a good novel, though it has, it is true, many "pulsebeats of life", some of them so violent and prolonged as to lead one to suspect heart trouble. On the other hand it is undeniably interesting, especially the earlier parts. The author has great vitality, a truly gigantic vocabulary which she strains and tortures, and a clever if limited imagination. The story is that of a woman who is resolved to go her own way and who finally wins a difficult victory through the glorious voice of her daughter and her own sacrifice. Miss Hurst is, at present, a better short story writer than a novelist, but her first try at the latter's art indicates a promising future if she will retract and concede that "chastity of

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form" is far from superfluous in her new field.

An unpleasant sort of chap is stabbed in the first chapter of Natalie Sumner Lincoln's "The Unseen Ear" (Appleton) but the human emotions portrayed are more baffling than the clues to the murderer. At the end, with the criminal caught and the family turned garrulous, we are still left with two unsolved mysteries: why does Miss Lincoln talk so much about the boudoir, and whose blood was on the shears?

In "Green Apple Harvest" (Dutton) Sheila Kaye-Smith has portrayed Bob Fuller, the Sussex village buck, his unsatisfied passion, his marriage, his religious conversion and tragic end, with a fine sincerity and a real wealth of local detail. The reek of the soil and the primitiveness of the characters are no bar to a subtle and penetrating study of remarkable virility. Fuller is the typical country rake, gambling his shillings away while he drinks more ale than is good for him. His passion for a gypsy girl gets him into trouble and survives even his conversion, a conversion so dynamic as to send him preaching about the countryside. The stupid villagers' anger at his apparent hypocrisy results in his being ducked in the pond and fatally injured. His younger brother Clem and the latter's sweet wife Polly are sympathetically conceived, and through the book runs a bucolic vein of beauty which humanizes a vivid narrative.

Pity, terror, passion, and mystery in the dark corners of docks and gambling dens, make "More Limehouse Nights" (Doran) poignant studies of crime and human frailty. If we miss something of the delicate fantasy and the wistfulness of certain stories in Thomas Burke's earliest companion volume, we have here a developed sense of the grotesque and the powerfully moving story that just misses melodrama. It is impossible to forget the strange characters that people these tales. However sordid they may be, they fascinate with their blazing frankness toward life and death. They are almost primitives.

"Sister Sue" (Houghton Mifflin) is a posthumous book by the author of "Pollyanna". Those who loved that book will be as enthusiastic over this as over anything Mrs. Porter ever wrote. Those who have not been followers of Mrs. Porter are in danger of becoming converts if they read "Sister Sue".

Sister Sue was so called because "to any questions you asked of any of the family there was only one answer: 'Sister Sue will know'; 'Sister Sue will do it'." Sister Sue had dreamed of becoming a pianist and of hearing audiences shout, "Encore! Encore! Susanna Gilmore! Encore!" Instead her dreams were sacrificed in order that she might care for an impoverished and stricken father and an inordinately selfish brother and sister—such as one meets in many a family. Even her suitor fails her; but Sister Sue is never vanquished and in the end—well, in the end everything is very satisfactory.

From Minetta Lane, New York City, to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, with side glimpses of diplomatic Washington—here is the background of "The Enchanted Canyon" (Stokes) by Honoré Willsie, author of "Still Jim". Enoch Huntington, after a childhood passed among gamblers and gangsters in Minetta Lane, is brought

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to his higher self by a sojourn in the Grand Canyon. When in later years the waters of life threaten to submerge him he flees once more to the Canyon, and again it performs the miracle of regeneration. A wonderful boat trip through the Canyon is vividly described. Shipwreck, broken legs, poisoned springs, resourceful overcoming of enormous difficulties carry the reader breathlessly along. Throughout the story runs a vein of patriotism as opposed to picayune politics; but it is the majesty of the Canyon that gives color to a most captivating tale.

For those who think of adventures as necessarily remote, for those who can picture beauty only as something exotic and tropical, for those who are captivated by characters obviously out of the ordinary, H. De Vere Stacpoole's "Satan" (McBride) is recommended. Bobby Ratcliffe turns his back upon civilization and takes up his adventures aboard the "Sarah Tyler" with two human extremists known as Satan and Jude. Of course Jude is the girl—the girl not as yet aware of the enchantments of love, the girl not yet awakened to the potency of her sex. We read of "leaping sardines" like "quivering silver", of water resembling "smashed sapphires". Mystery and adventure abound throughout.

Before you have read a dozen pages of "The Chestermarke Instinct" by J. S. Fletcher (Knopf), you won't rest easy until you know what became of John Horbury, the missing bank manager, and why Joseph Chestermarke, the bank's junior partner, sneeringly refused to help the investigating authorities. There are complications and mysteries aplenty, not the least of which is a sinister, closely-guarded laboratory in Chestermarke's garden. The plot is not improbable and its various threads are kept well in hand, the story unfolding naturally to a swift climax. Good reading for those who, with Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, are intellectually honest enough with themselves to enjoy thrills for their own sake!

A hero who is not wholly good, a villain who is not completely bad, and their adventures in the South Seas with a plague-ridden vessel and a fascinating but coldly revengeful native girl—these make up Lewis R. Freeman's "Hell's Hatches" (Dodd, Mead). The book is one of thrills and terror, at times hideous, always colorful, yet never luridly melodramatic.

"Tales from a Rolltop Desk" by Christopher Morley (Doubleday, Page) has the mellowness of spirit, the easy tolerance, the wide and unself-conscious understanding of books and men, which have become recognized characteristics of the genial conductor of the New York "Evening Post's" "Bowling Green". And both worst and best of all it reveals a talent—nay a positive genius—for outrageous puns. Most of the stories are concerned with the toilers of Grub Street, toilers with high ambitions and low pocketbooks. Their fine optimism, their cheerfulness under stress, their idealism hidden by a bantering humor, are delightfully portrayed without sacrifice to simple but effective plots. "Advice to the Lovelorn" is particularly happy—the tale of a Beatrice Fairfax caught in the net of her own advice. But all the stories are good and calculated to keep you in fine spirits through a hot afternoon.

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in May in the public libraries in the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Mysterious Rider	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
3. Potterism	*Rose Macaulay*	BONI
4. The Top of the World	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
5. The Sisters-in-Law	*Gertrude Atherton*	STOKES
6. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Sisters-in-Law	*Gertrude Atherton*	STOKES
3. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
4. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
5. The Mountebank	*William J. Locke*	LANE
6. The Mysterious Rider	*Zane Grey*	HARPER

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF
3. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
4. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
5. The Mysterious Rider	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
6. Miss Lulu Bett	*Zona Gale*	APPLETON

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. Miss Lulu Bett	*Zona Gale*	APPLETON
3. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
4. Potterism	*Rose Macaulay*	BONI
5. The Sisters-in-Law	*Gertrude Atherton*	STOKES
6. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON

WESTERN STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. Miss Lulu Bett	*Zona Gale*	APPLETON
3. The Sisters-in-Law	*Gertrude Atherton*	STOKES
4. The Mysterious Rider	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
5. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
6. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
4. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF
5. The Sisters-in-Law	*Gertrude Atherton*	STOKES
6. The Mysterious Rider	*Zane Grey*	HARPER

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
3.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
4.	The Peace Negotiations	*Robert Lansing*	HOUGHTON
5.	Crowding Memories	*Mrs. Thomas Bailey Aldrich*	HOUGHTON
6.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	The Peace Negotiations	*Robert Lansing*	HOUGHTON
3.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
4.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
5.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
6.	Mirrors of Downing Street	*"A Gentleman with a Duster"*	PUTNAM

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
3.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
4.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
5.	The Peace Negotiations	*Robert Lansing*	HOUGHTON
6.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

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6.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

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6.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

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FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Unusual Literary Phenomena

HERMANN BAHR (born 1863), known in this country as the author of "The Concert", has made a discovery. He chanced to read not long since a work by Adalbert Stifter (1805-1868) and was so captivated by it that he read another and then another until finally he came to Stifter's work of historical fiction entitled "Witiko". He was so charmed by it that he felt impelled to write a diminutive book under the caption of "Adalbert Stifter. Eine Entdeckung".

In one way the incident is of no special significance. Stifter has had other admirers. There was for example Friedrich Nietzsche who claimed that he was one of the three or four really great German writers. Moreover, "Witiko" is not a book that you can buy. In another way, Hermann Bahr's experience is uncommonly suggestive. Every now and then, and far too frequently, some incarnate pessimist bases his prediction of the downfall of all things æsthetic on what he feels is the decadence of contemporary literature. Suppose it is not merely decadent but actually dead, foul and fit only to be buried out of sight of men. There remains an unbounded field for discovery. Even the omnivorous read only the smallest fraction of the world's best literature.

If the writing and publishing of epics, lyrics, and dramas were to cease at once and forever, the world would be out of the best of reading matter only when the present volumes were worn to the point of illegibility. In very truth, we have enough literature on hand to last for centuries; the only trouble is, the future, destined to become the present in a very short while, has to be treated by poets as the past, once the present, has been. Nor is it comforting to realize that literature is not getting better. It is helpful however to reflect on the fact that just as no two human faces are exactly alike, so are no two poems or epics or dramas exactly alike. Literature never repeats itself.

Hermann Bahr looked about him and discovered Adalbert Stifter. It is somewhat (it is impossible to construct an exact American analogy) as if Rupert Hughes were to discover Thoreau. Bahr's find was so suggestive that I am minded to devote the remaining space allotted me to other unusual foreign language books that have come to my notice within the last month.

A little over a year ago, Margareta, Crown Princess of Sweden, died. When the news of her death reached Hjalmar Branting, then Prime Minister and the great Socialist always, he was addressing a group of political malcontents. He stopped at once remarking that "a sunbeam had vanished from Sweden's royal house". He then hastened to express his sympathy to King Gustaf V, whom he had soundly thrashed years ago in school. On May 1 there appeared at Stockholm a book on Margareta written by Selma Lagerlöf, Agnes Branting, Sir Edmond Phipps her first teacher, Lady Egerton, and Miss Leila Milne. There are three hundred numbered copies and each costs 110 kroner, or about $25 at the present rate of exchange. Was such

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honor ever shown any other heir or heiress to a throne so soon after death? Was even Good King Dagobert so kindly remembered? Is it any wonder that Strindberg was and Verner von Heidenstam is an aristocrat?

While the Theatre Guild of New York is presenting Franz Molnar's "Liliom", which the more elaborate announcements inform us means "Roughneck", the National Theatre of Budapest is producing Molnar's new drama entitled "The Swan". The scene is laid in Austro-Hungarian court circles, of itself a hardy adventure with Horty ruling Hungary, Charles Hapsburg willing to relieve him of his burden, and President Hainisch guiding the Austrian ship of state. What happens? Princess Beatrix wishes to marry her daughter Alexandra to Albert, the heir to the throne. But Albert is not exactly overcome by Alexandra's charms. Her mother decides to arouse his interest by making him believe that her daughter is enamored of a man far below her in the social scale, that is, of the tutor of her brothers. Alexandra coquettes with the young professor but marries the heir to the throne.

What is unusual about this? That Franz Molnar can hold a European audience with a play built around such an idea; that both monarchists and republicans of Austria as well as Hungary can take pleasure in seeing their ways of yesterday made the subject of amusement today; and that the play should be called "The Swan" because a swan stays in the water, never makes excursions out onto the land—as Alexandra did when she danced with a mere professor—and never sings its song—as Alexandra would have done had she married the professor, for that would have been the end of her princeliness. What could Molnar do with this on Broadway where his "Roughneck" is a success?

But swans and roughnecks aside, word was given out in Europe not long since that Goethe's "Faust" had been translated into Serbian. This was regarded as a rather unusual tribute to Goethe's greatest work, and the Serbs as well, despite the fact that "Werther's Sufferings" had been done into Serbian as early as 1844. Now comes the news from Reykjavik that "Faust" has been translated into Icelandic by Jonsson fra Vogi, an instructor at the University of Iceland. J. C. Poëstion of Vienna and Paul Hermann of Torgau, two of the greatest German authorities on Icelandic, say that it is a remarkably happy translation.

Iceland is about five times the size of Massachusetts and has a population of 90,000; it has a quite respectable body of literature of its own; its language to this day is that of the twelfth century "Eddas"; cultured Icelanders can read German probably better than they can read Danish, which would naturally be their mother tongue next to Icelandic. This being the case it was possible to bring out only a very small edition of the translation, which made it necessary for someone to subsidize the venture. This the State of Iceland did; it appropriated 10,000 kroner, or $2,500, to the end that its people might read "Faust" with greater intelligence. And yet we are amused when we hear that the Icelanders view American culture superciliously. If our government were asked to appropriate money for a similar cause the man who made the suggestion would be placed under the surveillance of an expert in pathology.

Let us however turn to the south. We have recently witnessed a remarkable increase of interest in all things Spanish. Students who under normal

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circumstances would be studying German, are now studying the language of Lope de Vega, though it is not well to ask where the teachers so suddenly came from. In so far as the new tendency was not inspired by patriotism it owes its origin to commerce, the idea being that within a very few years we are going to be doing a bulk of business with the South American republics such as we formerly did with Europe.

But somebody has overlooked something in this reasoning. There is Brazil, whose commercial prosperity at present is said by those who know to be amazing. And Brazil was settled by Portuguese, is governed by Portuguese, and Portuguese is the language of the people. It would consequently pay the United States government to have the article in the last number of the "Revue de Genève" on "Le Roman au Brésil" by Ronald de Carvalho translated and franked out to those educators of this country who are determined that the coming generation shall know a great deal of Spanish. By it their attention would be called to the fact that Spanish will not get you very far in that one of the South American republics which is almost synonymous with South America itself, and that this republic already has a literature of its own of which it is not ashamed and of which the rest of the world need not be.

There would be no point in listing here all the Brazilian novelists whom Monsieur Carvalho discusses, inviting as are his critiques of such contemporary writers as Graça Aranha, Coelhe Netto, Afranio Peixeto, and Machado de Assis. The chief value of the article lies in the light it throws on the evolution of Brazilian literature. At first its writers were inclined to spend their whole time, and such genius as they may have had, on descriptions of landscapes and in the interests of religion. Getting beyond this, there followed the period of imitation—imitation of Paris, Madrid, Lisbon, London, and the United States, with especial reference to Fenimore Cooper. Then there followed what is called "regional" literature in which each writer was "inspired" by that section of the country with which he chanced to be familiar. And now Brazilians are beginning to produce Brazilian literature, with real men and women as characters, with a human and social rather than a purely descriptive outlook—and written in Portuguese.

But let us turn to a literary phenomenon that is unqualifiedly unusual. In 1840, the French Abbé J. H. Michon brought out the first textbook on graphology. Since then there have been quite a few "scientists" hardy enough to insist that one's character can be determined by his handwriting. If it is true, the writer of these lines is a hardened criminal. But let this pass. Robert Saudek began publishing recently in the "Nieuwe Courant" a novel entitled "The Diplomats". The action begins with the outbreak of the war and closes with the armistice. The Dutchman has made a study of the characters of the leading personalities of the war as determined by their handwritings. One conclusion must suffice. The young Clémenceau is depicted as an idealist of fast hue and a stranger to posing. The French Academy, of which Raymond Poincaré is a member, does not feel this way about it. Saudek's is one of the most unusual novels of the season. And what is more, it has already been translated into a number of languages and is merely the first part of an epic trilogy.

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

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French Notes

WHEN we recently mentioned Marcel Proust and his last book, his preface to Paul Morand's "Tendres Stocks" had not yet reached us. It contains a keen reviewing of the various styles in the French nineteenth century prose, including Stendhal, Flaubert, Renan, Sainte-Beuve (very much ill-treated) and others, and it is itself a model in subtlety of style. It comes as a commentary to a remark of Anatole France, who said that people have written bad prose since the end of the eighteenth century. It is a plea for the right of prose writers in general, and of Paul Morand in particular, to a *singular* style if they need it to express singular and personal thoughts.

As for "Tendres Stocks" itself, it is composed of three portraits of young women, strangely different and still possessing unity. All three have London as their background, and the author, who is in diplomacy and is young, obtains intense effects by the contrast of his elliptic style, piercing analysis, and French perspectives, with the English atmosphere of 1914-1919.

Before this book, two volumes of poems by Paul Morand had been published; in "Lampes à Arc" are probably to be found the best instances of this original, humorous, and bitter talent. Translation is rather difficult.... This is seen at the roulette-table at San Sebastian: "The ivory ball unwinds itself like a machine-gun ribbon —singing that false lullaby called Chance...." On a road of the war zone: "Lorries whose names are numbers—carrying propellers with their m a h o g a n y petals." And on the Champs-Elysées: "The British Ambassador walks back from the Foreign Office—Like England, he is bounded South by gaiters of white chalk—and North by a black chimney."

We had found a similar style in Valéry Larbaud's poems, with less sharpness, and more nostalgic tenderness. This "manière" can surprise the reader, but as Marcel Proust explains, it is not at first that such creations are admitted as being true to life. "A new original writer is generally hard to read and difficult to understand because he assembles things according to new relations." Later on, those novelties seem easy to admit, and still later they become the very features of classical standard.

Both Marcel Proust and Paul Morand may well become classics—after quite a little while.

Of all the prospective members of the French Academy, perhaps Edmond Jaloux is the safest bet. He is quietly attaining solid and lasting reputation. Last year, the Grand Prix de Littérature was awarded to him by the French Institute. Strangely enough, such honors do not deprive him of the respect and appreciation of younger men of letters, as logically should happen. A new novel of his, "La Fin d'un Beau Jour", has been published recently. Some critics will prefer Jaloux's masterpiece, "The Rest is Silence", written ten years ago; the present book, nevertheless, adds to the credit of this novelist. It tells the romance of a famous writer and a young girl admirer of his genius. The action develops in Versailles, and the city of Louis XIV affords a dignified frame for the story.

A sign of the times is to be seen in the creation and in the tremendous success of the new group called C.T.I. (Confédération des Travailleurs Intellectuels) which has now, according to a recent report, about 120,000 members in France—the example being followed in other countries.

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French people, and especially intellectuals, have strong individualistic tendencies. It is hard to bring more than a few together on a matter of opinion. There has been no such thing in modern France as unanimity of taste or unanimous tendencies in thought, as was often the case in other countries. But the economic problem which the intellectual class has to face is the same for all. Whether a man is a classicist or a revolutionist in art, whether a disciple of Racine or of Rimbaud in letters, he has to eat at least once a day. That common problem has proven dangerously pressing in the years following the armistice, when intellectual workers have suffered more than any other class, until they adopted some features of the "union" system and formed a vast association, including teachers, artists, scientists, and practically everybody whose work is not directed to material purpose. The aims of the C. T. I. are strictly economic, with no political linking of any sort. It has been officially helped by President Millerand, who received its leaders recently, and the C. T. I. is already credited with having obtained a betterment of conditions for intellectual workers in general.

PIERRE DE LANUX

Germany's Young Writers

ONE of the greatest stylists in Germany today, a man whom his war experiences have ripened and developed, is Bernard Kellermann, well-known in the States as author of the imaginative romance of titanic energies "The Tunnel". In spite of its popularity, "The Tunnel" is by no means the best of Kellermann's books. He has just published a new romance "Der Neunte November" (The Ninth of November). In this book Kellermann goes back beyond the revolutionary days to their far-lying causes and begins his story in Berlin, in January, 1918. As background to a well-woven novel, he spreads out before us a vivid panorama of the bitter war years in all their fear and waiting and hunger, in all their horror and glory and death. Every type of soldier stalks living through the pages—Otto, the dashing young officer, rendered thoughtful by his trench experiences and haunted during his leave from the front by the inferno he has left; Heinz, still fired with young enthusiasm, his one fear that all may be over before his chance comes to do his bit; the General, shaping destinies far from the front, a pillar of duty, filled with military knowledge and ignorance of men; Ackermann, the pale young soldier-student preaching Socialism and the brotherhood of man and holding political meetings in his barren little room; Herbst, the old provincial, wandering dazedly through the city streets and mourning for his son; then the women and the many minor characters, each a bright and living stone in the vast mosaic of the war. Unforgetable descriptions occur; one most moving page describes how the transports of wounded from the front come stealing in all night long and every night, filling the hospitals and the schools and the public halls with these innumerable broken men whose existence must be hushed up, lest the people fall a prey to despair. The gospel of the new order of things for which the Revolution shall pave the way, is preached in many glowing phrases. A little long, a little ecstatic, it is nevertheless a great book, one of the greatest yet written about the war and its end.

Another book which is arousing a

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mild sensation is "Vampyr" (The Vampire) by Hanns Heinz Ewers. This is an exciting novel, based upon the author's experiences in America during the war. Unfortunately Herr Ewers has a reputation to keep up as a weird and dæmonic person and has surrounded his story with a vast deal of claptrap mysticism and perverse eroticism which throw a peculiar, not to say unfavorable light upon his cause and himself. When it is revealed that his hero is the vampire of the title it will be seen that the book can scarcely be called sympathetic. Everyone here has enjoyed the sport of ferreting out the identities of the fictional characters, to whom Ewers, either out of spite or from a desire for sensation, has given only the most gossamer disguises.

There is an immense productivity in poetry—many publishers issue whole series of new poets who astonish one by their range and power and the wealth of talent they display. One of the new leaders, if not one of the younger men, is Theodor Däubler, a German-Italian, a native of Trieste, who combines the deep thought of the German with the fire and passion of the Italian. For years the work of this great lyric poet has been as it were a precious secret, known only to the circle of his poet friends, but during the war one large and beautiful volume after another of his works has been published. Books are written about him, no list of modern intellectuals is complete without his name, no progressive review without his work. Of late Däubler has become very mystic. His last work, "Nordlicht" (The Northern Light), an immense epic poem in several books, is so esoteric that treatises have been written by his admirers in explanation of it. Däubler's style is very rich and full of original and striking figures—he too has adopted the expressionistic creed.

A significant feature which must not be passed over is the activity of the philosophic writers, of whom Germany always possessed more than her share. They are toiling to create a new world out of the chaos of the present. Dr. Oswald Spengler, in "Der Untergang des Abendlandes" (The Decline of the Occident), a deep and ominous book, the demand for which cannot be supplied fast enough by the presses, prophesies the collapse of the western countries, their spiritual and mental decay. Vaihinger of Jena, Count Kayserling with his famous philosophical foundation at Darmstadt, and others take a more optimistic view and have hopes of remolding the world for the better.

The anthology is also in great favor and is largely used by the various parties to influence public opinion. Careful quotations will show the same classical author as a republican in one collection, a tory loyalist in another, and a free-thinking radical in a third.

One may sum up by saying that the most vital forces among today's new young writers are active in the drama, both prose and verse, and next to this in lyric poetry. Fiction, with the exception of Kasimir Edschmid and Curt Corrinth, pursues on the whole the more conventional paths. Corrinth is a fervid young genius with a style as expressionistic as is consistent with a degree of intelligibility — language shorn to its rudiments. After reading a few pages of his erotic novels, one positively has the feeling of being physically out of breath, so fierce, vibrant, and tempestuous is the pace he sets.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

Konrad Bercovici

Confetti, candles in shrines, little girls dressed like angels swung down on pullies over narrow, crowded streets, doves loosed and fluttering: a festival for San Rocco in Italian New York. Just around the corner we drift into a Yiddish wedding feast, and dance with the bride just as though we'd been invited. On to a Rumanian coffee house! And there, though we had been running away from the literary, we find it again, in the long mustaches and quiet presence of Konrad Bercovici, author of "Dust of New York", a new volume of whose stories is to appear in the fall. "There is no corner of a New York street", he tells you over a cup of thick coffee, "where you cannot find a story or a character for a story. They are everywhere about you." And when Bercovici, himself, breaks away from the coffee house, and strolls down Fifth Avenue, balancing his curious cane and displaying his wittingly unpressed brown suit and his ferociously genial countenance, we, too, think that material for character study is abroad.

Charles Hanson Towne, just returned from a trip across-continent, has some merry tales to tell of his experiences. He sends us the following lament:

If you don't believe that everyone in the world is writing for the movies, just listen to this little story of Clayton Hamilton's, who is himself a scenario writer (or scenario engineer) for the Goldwyn Studios.

Mr. Hamilton's friend A. E. Thomas went abroad last summer for the first time in his life, oddly enough; and Hamilton wanted him to meet all the distinguished men and women of England. So he began to write some letters of introduction. He started in with Sir Gilbert Parker. No, he couldn't give him one to the author of "The Right of Way", for of course Sir Gilbert was in Hollywood. Nor to Somerset Maugham for the same reason. Elinor Glyn? She, too, was busy with the "fillums". Edward Knoblock? Of course not. He was doing "The Three Musketeers" for Douglas Fairbanks right on the premises. Gertrude Atherton was not in London this year; she too was at that little Hollywood Hotel, where the whole world passes by. And Sir J. M. Barrie was on his way over, and would doubtless cross Thomas on the ocean. Strangely enough, the only man of letters in England whom Hamilton knew intimately was Alfred Noyes; and he was there only because it was his Sabbatical year. Generally he is at Princeton.

Now do you understand why magazine and book publishers are wringing their hands and pulling their hair because of the dearth of good short stories and novels?

Archibald Marshall had just arrived from England, had spent the previous sunshiny day in the country with golf and tennis, and was now ready to doff his grey hat to New York City and read a sheaf of young American realists. But first of all, this student of calm English country life wants to go quietly, as a boarder, to some American farm community, to live with a typical American family. There should be no difficulty there. He wants to talk with country preachers, with school teachers, to study the inti-

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mate ways of our native villages, to settle down for three months or so and write a novel about us that will be quite different from "Main Street". The country is pretty large. It's hard to pick the right spot. Of course, without hesitation, we recommended the Vermont hills; but then we knew that we were hopelessly prejudiced, so we sent him to Professor Phelps for advice. The creator of "The Clintons" is a quiet English gentleman; tall, robust, with merry blue eyes and a hearty laugh. He visited America some years ago, saw a Yale-Harvard football game in '89, I think it was, or '99, perhaps. "Then", he said, "I was at Harvard; but this time I'm going to Yale." They are conferring an honorary degree on the famous novelist there, as we have since learned. We talked of English and American writers, of prohibition and of country manners. Iced tea, he thought odd; but excellent nevertheless. Sheila Kaye-Smith he considered a novelist of much power. Her "Sussex Gorse" he liked particularly. An anecdote he told us of G. B. S. and Mr. Goldwyn of American moving picture fame, has kept us chuckling ever since. (Censored.)

Rebecca Porter, whose "Girl from Four Corners" is in its second edition, is spending the year in California, where she is at work on stories for "Scribner's Magazine", the first of which, "The Wives of Xerxes", appeared in the January number.

"The Caloric Family", being "The First and Only Home Owners' Journal Devoted Exclusively to Pipeless Heating", according to its own announcement, writes us that if house organs are to be considered literary, it is certainly just as literary as any other! Pursuant to this advice we therefore quote without comment:

> Things will be different in the home; in fact, it will be a different home—perhaps a new home—if husband and wife will talk things over as they should. She may think he is stingy because she has been deprived of money. She may not know all his business obligations. He may think she is unreasonable because he does not understand that she wants money in her own right to spend without accounting to him for every cent.
>
> Talk things over just as frankly as you did in courtship. Think about this—try it.
>
> —*Western Farmer.*

On May 18 in New York was given a most unusual literary dinner, unusual because it was given by a group of famous authors and editors to a woman who has for many years been an assistant editor on a magazine, a particularly efficient and gracious lady, Virginia Stella Roderick. It was a recognition of the quiet efforts of a person not directly in the glare of the literary spotlight, who has yet aided the development of more writers than anyone else in the world, perhaps, except John O'Hara Cosgrave, under whose editorship in the heyday of "Everybody's" Miss Roderick served. She has now resigned her post with that magazine and is to edit "The Woman Citizen". It was an entertaining dinner. George Barr Baker was toastmaster. Dorothy Canfield Fisher came down from her Vermont hills to make a speech. She told the story of how Miss Roderick started her on her career as a writer. Mrs. Fisher had sent some stories to "Everybody's". On the strength of these, Mr. Ridgeway offered her a position as manuscript reader at twelve dollars a week, with the suggestion that by reading others' work she would herself learn to write. Mrs. Fisher was debating the problem. She asked for time to decide. Miss Roderick, who had been called into the room, followed

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her to the street and told her that if she wanted to write—and she could if she wished—manuscript reading wasn't the thing for her. Mrs. Fisher took the young manuscript reader's advice, and so the author of "The Brimming Cup" was saved from the editorial chair. Julian Street was highly amusing and Arthur Train highly sincere. All insisted that Miss Roderick was the most gracious of editors, and that the best days of American magazines were those when Mr. Cosgrave was making "Everybody's" and when, as Julian Street put it, one went to the office of a magazine actually for pleasure!

Colonel Charles Young, U. S. A., sends us the following, clipped from "West Africa":

The Peer Kept His Head

During the last week or two there has been much controversy about a correspondence between Lord Leverhulme and Mr. Augustus John, the artist. Mr. John painted a portrait of Lord Leverhulme. It proved too big for the space set aside for it, and Lord Leverhulme cut off and used for that space the head only. Mr. John learned of this—how, I need not stop to explain—and protested, in the interests of art, to which Lord Leverhulme replies, in effect, that a man may do as he will with his own; which used to be good doctrine in England in the days before Lansbury was king of the castle. The only case I recall that bears upon the point at issue is that of Dr. Johnson, who, when he came to London and got £5 for a poem, which the publisher cut down, made the manly reply that the publisher was within his rights in doing so—a reply, I have always thought, which contains a lesson for all of us little scribblers of an hour. I am Fleet Street man enough to believe that Dr. Johnson will live when Mr Augustus John has long been forgotten. Meanwhile, a friend of all of us West Africans, who has a pretty wit and whose name I must, to my regret, keep to myself, sends me the following, with the remark that "even a poor imitation of wit deserves encouragement in these sad days." I don't agree about the imitation, but do agree about the sadness of the days, and with a view of lessening a bit, I give his verse:—

A peer and a painter, once very good friends,
  Have tired of discussion by letter
About nothing except the middle and ends
  Of a picture that might have been better.
At all events, that seems the view of the peer.
  But the painter sees nothing but red,
And he's not a bit happy—that's only too clear,
  For the peer has at least kept his head.

William Beebe, not long since returned from the wilds of New Guinea, was surrounded by pictures of frogs, birds, and what not in his New York City apartment. Any explorer-author has always filled us with envy and awe, especially William Beebe; for we have cherished his "Jungle Peace" as one of the best of travel books. He is a slight man, dark, wiry, nervous, filled with sparkle and vitality. The months that he spends in the jungle each year do not tend to change his liking for things American, however; for he seemed to be looking forward with quite as much avidity to tennis matches with F. P. A. as to the appearance in the fall of his new book, "Jungle Lore". Beebe assured us that the station on the edge of the jungle, where he spends a good half or more of his time, is quite as entertaining and as easy to live in as an apartment house, if not more so. It gives a chance to work with native specimens under normal living conditions, and has been a huge advance over old methods of investigation. After researches have been made and specimens collected, it is possible to come home, sit down, study, sketch, and be comfortable. Mr. Beebe is first and foremost the scientist; but in this field we could not follow far. Writing, for him, is entirely incidental; and if you admire his books too much, he will begin to fidget and to worry for fear you may gain the impression that he

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takes letters seriously. Science and writing are different, it seems, and most scientists, in our experience, have been quite unable to write readably. For this reason we may doubly thank our stars for Mr. Beebe, who has the great ability to tell us accurately and yet charmingly in terms that reach the layman, of nature and scientific researches.

Of the poems in the April magazines, those that seemed interesting were few and far between: "Hereafter" by John Drinkwater in "The Yale Review", "Foreboding" by Hazel Hall in "The Yale Review", "Silver Filagree" by Elinor Wylie in "Poetry", "Unintentional Paint" by Carl Sandburg in "The New Republic", "Shadowy—Under My Window" by Ellen Janson in "The Measure".

A lanky Californian, just one generation removed from Scotland, and wearing the initials R. L. D., has recently entered the fold of novelists, Harold Waldo tells us. Bob Duffus, as San Francisco "fourth estate" knows him, is a cool thinker type. He has thought his way coolly across the continent twice. Once when as a boy of eighteen he left his Vermont pastures and carried some of their mettle to Leland Stanford University and San Francisco; and again in 1919, when he carpetbagged back to the eastern seaboard and unlimbered in the New York "Globe" offices to write editorials and such. Some of the latter got into a novel called "Escape", which will be published at a future date. His California friends knew that that old carpetbag with R. L. D. initialed on the side was stuffed with rare matter. Duffus seasoned his timbers on the same paper as Sinclair Lewis did—the San Francisco "Bulletin".

The American Defense Society, New York City, has organized a campaign for putting a portrait of Theodore Roosevelt on the walls of every schoolhouse in the country. Already the state of Pennsylvania has one in practically every school, also Minnesota and Kentucky. Ohio has ordered 14,000, Wyoming, 2,000, and so on. With the conditions for securing the portrait such as they are, we see no reason why it should not go everywhere. The school, or patriotic citizens, must raise money for the proper framing of the portrait and see to it that an appropriate ceremony is carried out when the picture is hung. Why don't they begin on the libraries, after the schools have been canvassed? Roosevelt certainly belongs in the reading room, too! May we quote two stanzas of Corinne Roosevelt Robinson's poem "The A. E. F. to T. R."?

You, our leader, but more, our greatest companion—
Near enough for the spur of your voice and your hand grip,
Ever ready to share, but sharing, still leading
Upward and onward.

Listen! This is our pledge, to fare and to follow,
Follow the trail you blazed, without shadow of turning,—
We, who have learned of you, shall not be found wanting
Here or hereafter!

Louisville recently held an author's reading for the benefit of the Wellesley College endowment fund. Apparently it was an extremely family affair. George Madden Martin read "The Sleeping Sickness" from "Children in the Mist"; Alice Hegan Rice, "The Nut" from "Turnabout Tales"; while Abbie Meguire Roach, Abbie Carter Goodloe and Eleanor Mercein Kelly were the other readers. Mrs. Kelly, so they say, was once a resident of Milwaukee. Her first novel, attempting

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to paint high life in Kentucky, astounded the hightoned southerners; for did not the heroine slide down the banisters and the negro servant wait table with bare feet? This caused some comment as to the distance between Milwaukee and Louisville; but we understand from competent authorities that the lady by her charm, grace, and brilliance is rapidly becoming one of the most popular literary ladies of the south.

When Ethel Kelley wrote her novel "Beauty—and Mary Blair", she didn't know that she had written a frivolous book. Even now she insists that it is a very serious study of the young lady of today. At any rate, people are reading it. There's a curious thing about the name "Mary Blair". When Miss Kelley chose it, she took a New York telephone directory and looked for a nice one-syllable name that sounded well—then she attached it to her heroine. It was not until the novel was published that she discovered Mary Blair, the actress, starring then in Eugene O'Neill's "Diff'rent". So she promptly invited her heroine to tea, and from all accounts they had a very pleasant time. Miss Kelley is living in New York City now; but she spends her summers in Cape Cod, and it is of that region that she is now writing. Her next novel, apparently, will be quite different from this rather searching study of "These Wild Young People". She told us many things that were most valuable to us about the younger generation—that is, the feminine side of it. She was walking one day, it seems, on Riverside Drive, and she saw a young girl, elaborately dressed, coming out of an apartment house. There was a sadness and an aged expression in the face that attracted Miss Kelley. She began picturing that face in a story—and, there you are!

If you have never heard Vachel Lindsay read in a drawing room, you have a monstrous treat in store for you. He is dramatic on a lecture platform; but at a tea party he is almost Simian. With his hair flopping over his face, he strides up and down, waving a majestic finger, and shouting strenuously. We found his stocky fist shaking in our face, as that bellowing, roaring voice said, "Down, Down to the Devil!" We squirmed, remembering past sins. Not long ago when he was in New York we heard Mr. Lindsay read his then unpublished poem, "Johnny Appleseed". We think it a fine piece of writing, with much beauty and dramatic fire. It recounts the old man's progress across the Appalachians and his spreading of the seeds of civilization.

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Sherwood Anderson and Paul Rosenfeld have sailed for Europe. At least, we think that they have sailed; for the doubt in our minds is whether Mr. Anderson finally turned up at the ship.

His friends had found him most elusive during his brief stay in New York before he left. However, we managed to catch him in the Gossip Shop one afternoon. We had expected to see someone a little wild. But instead of that, the author of "Marching Men" and "Poor White" seems a very gentle middle-aged fellow, with rather piercing dark eyes. He told us of his new volume of short stories, to be published in the fall, and of his efforts at art. Distinctly a pleasant person.

Here is a new set of literary questions. Answers must be submitted by July fifteenth. You must state whether or not you looked up the reply. Best three replies will receive a book prize (any book in the Brief Reviews).

1. What well-known contemporary light verse poet, in a lyric addressed to his fair one, compares her eyes to twin gas-burners?

2. The hero of what early English novel might be called "determinedly chaste"?

3. What "undesirable citizen" advised his fellow Americans to discard the present constitution when they saw fit? In what classic document is the advice contained?

4. Name an English novel and an English play written for the purpose of improving prison conditions.

5. What American writer, in a story about the cruise of a boat, perpetrated the absurdity of having a tunnel on shore connect conveniently with the hold of a ship?

6. In what American novel is to be found the best portrait ever painted of the pestiferous "little brother", especially in his eternal warfare against the grownup sister?

Following are the answers to Miss Ford's questions in the June number:

1. One of the best chapters in "Vanity Fair" describes the magnificent entertainment given by the Marquis of Steyne at Gaunt House where Becky Sharp reached the height of her social success by her acting in the charade "Nightingale". Her triumph was complete. Lord Steyne followed her around for the remainder of the evening; she danced with the diplomats, she had supper at the table with royalty. Twenty-four hours later her husband had broken in upon her tête-à-tête supper with the Marquis—and Becky was a ruined woman.

2. Charles A. Dana, the most brilliant of modern editors, has been a member of the Brook Farm Community; so had Margaret Fuller, the first woman to blaze the trail of feminine journalism; while a third was Father Isaac T. Hecker, who stepped from New England transcendentalism to the Roman Church and founded the great order of the Paulist Fathers, whose members are all recruits from Protestantism. Three more diverse careers could hardly be found.

3. Archbishop Benson, whose sons Arthur C. Benson, E. F. Benson, and the late Father Hugh Benson have all attained a certain distinction as writers.

4. Macaulay's New Zealander is found in his review of Ranke's "History of the Popes".

5. This quotation is from Sir Henry Newbolt's poem "Vitaï Lampada", which describes a cricket match at Clifton College where the author was at school.

6. The cartoon "Dropping the Pilot" appeared in "Punch" on March 29, 1890, and is one of John Tenniel's best pieces of work. It was occasioned by the young Kaiser's dismissal of Bismarck and represents him leaning carelessly over the railing of the ship of State while the great Chancellor is going down the side.

7. George T. Lanigan's book of fables "Out of the World" was a worthy predecessor of

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"Fables in Slang" and as true to life, though not couched in such colloquial terms.

8. In Miss Austen's novel "Persuasion" the heroine, Anne Elliott, is talking to her cousin, a man of the world, and between them this definition of good society is evolved, one that has yet to be improved upon.

When Burton Rascoe, that delightful and authoritative critic of the middle west, decided to turn from his native heaths and come to the greater city to help edit "McCall's Magazine", Gene Markey tells us that there were many sad parties in Chicago. (But not so many, we guess, as when the unrivaled assistant editor of "Poetry", who wears orange gowns and hats so charmingly, left New York to return to Chicago. Alas, say we!) Markey says, "At one of them (the parties, he means) Ben Hecht, whose novel 'Eric Dorn' heads the Putnam fall list, performed a violin solo, with original unexpurgated verses of that classic melody, 'Since Rebecca Came Back from Mecca'. At another party Henry Kitchell Webster rendered a saxophone solo. At other parties music was likewise a feature, two numbers being especially popular—'Any Old Port in a Storm' and 'Sherrily We Roll Along'."...Well, Mr. Rascoe is fast becoming acclimated. We hear that New York is seriously interfering with the progress of his novel, however. At least he told us so when, together with Guy Holt, that youngest of all publishers, we bade farewell to Sinclair Lewis, then about to sail for England to spend an indefinite number of months or years. "I have no plans," said Mr. Lewis. "Plans interfere with work. I'm going to stay in Europe as long as I'm amused—no longer." We said goodby on one corner; then we said goodby on another. In all, though we didn't personally count the farewells, there were a great many. Then we met again, went to Greenwich Village, and said goodby some more. Good luck, Mr. Lewis, say we all!...Carl Sandburg returned from a five week, six thousand mile trip taking in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Fe, University of Utah, University of Texas, University of Arkansas, etc., etc., and all the way to Nashville. Then he set out on another one to the east, and slipped quietly into New York City one day. We had never seen him, and we failed to pick him out from his pictures because he was thoroughly disguised by a black cap pulled down over the eyes. Alas! He gave us one look, and recognized us by our hair! We then had breakfast, and listened to that deep soft magnetic voice as it told us of Charlie Chaplin, met and admired on the coast; of Charles J. Finger, who was William Marion Reedy's best friend, and who lives on a ranch and edits "All's Well"; of poetry in its truest sense, of democracy, and of life. Sandburg is a deep and quiet thinker, a man of profound understanding and great humanity. There is something about him curiously like Robert Frost—yet how unlike! Both are quiet, white-haired, a trifle burly, both slow-speaking, both gentle; but Frost is as definitely a product of high hills and thunder clouds as Sandburg is a product of prairies and steel mills. The one is as fresh as a mountain brook and as deep as a still pool black and quiet in an Adirondack forest; the other, like the steady flow of the Mississippi itself. Both speak of America, definitively, profoundly. We are grateful to Carl Sandburg for giving us so much of his time.... Louis Untermeyer has been visiting Chicago, and was a feature of the Midland Authors' poetry dinner. Also, the greatest city of the middle west finds itself much excited over Eunice Tietjens's novel "Jake" which has

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such a lovely scarlet cover, and which we haven't yet read but will soon. John V. A. Weaver, another graduate from this town, has been cutting new capers. He has a smart book column in the Brooklyn "Eagle". It runs on Saturdays and he has refrained from calling it "From Chicago to Brooklyn". John is one of the gayest youths in the world, or was. He may be seen almost any noon at the Hotel Algonquin, with his pet dog. His "In American" still continues to sell, and poor John has been seeking expert advice as to whether he had better succumb to the temptation to write another such volume of poetry, or take to regular English again. Personally, we hope that he does both....Harry Hansen, always pleasant, always with much literary gossip tucked up his capacious sleeve, dropped into town for a few moments on his way to the Booksellers' convention. We wonder if his career as literary editor for the Chicago "Daily News" will progress as did Henry Sell's. Henry Sell is now editor of "Harper's Bazar". We had lunch with him not long ago. Once his only interest in life was books. Now he knows more about clothes than most. We lunched at a certain café where Carpentier sat next us, resplendent in blue shirt, blue collar, blue tie, etc., etc. We have been criticized for not noticing what the prizefighter was eating—probably bluepoints. At any rate, you know what sort of place it was—where only the socially elect and prizefighters can afford to dine. Mr. Sell is going to take us to the races some time. He radiates, successfully and completely, the atmosphere of his distinguished magazine. Seriously, it seems to us to be a great feat, to shift from a devouring interest in literature and an acquaintance with the literary elect, to an impassioned appreciation of shades of evening dresses and a place in a coterie of fashionable dressmakers and other denizens of the Ritz whose background is as unimpeachable as the sunny side of Beacon Street. And still they come from Chicago. The famous Mrs. Hahner of Marshall Field's book store glowed dazzlingly on us not long ago....Gene Markey himself has migrated, but perhaps not permanently, to New York City, so we don't know where we'll ever hear about Chicago any more. Markey may be seen in literary haunts, with or without Charles Hanson Towne, as the case may be. He writes well. He should stay in New York. At any rate, we are thinking of going to Chicago again. We once lived there when we were six or seven years of age, and have pleasant recollections of the parks as excellent playgrounds. We need to play once more. Then, too, we haven't yet met Ben Hecht.

To our mind, young—or supposedly young—Joseph L. Ranft, Jr.'s, review of D. H. Lawrence's "Women in Love" characterizes, satirizes, and effectually disposes of that astounding book. This prodigy of Baltimore is wise, indeed, for a high school sophomore. He is wise with the wisdom of a Mencken bud!

"Let us drop this old æsthetic rule of thumb and confess that during the last century a new race of artists sprang up from some strange element and, like flying fish, revealed to a wondering world their composite structures."

This epoch which James Huneker notes is more potently schismatic, more pregnant of a sweeping, radical mutation than the Renaissance or any other epoch in the history of art. Music becomes a tonal cacophony, dominated by strange discordant overtones. Strange harmonies emerge and are drowned in a surge of bizarre dynamics. Two immane giants rise out of Europe, poets who, by the magic of their chords, cause a transient aura to arise from an orchestra so efficacious as to transport whole auditoriums to the Hyperboreas of their chimeras. A febrile, pristine ecstasy creeps into

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verse and prose and painting. Monet, Debussy, Epstein, Strauss, Whitman become symbols of contempt for the factitious, votaries of the sensuous, rampant goddess of Modern Art.

In David Herbert Lawrence this goddess is synthesized; the harmonies of Debussy are interwoven into his prose; the radicalism of Gauguin and Whitman is vented in his verse. "The White Peacock", "Amores", "Sons and Lovers", surely these bear testimony that Lawrence is one of the few on whom James Huneker says the primal gift of ecstasy is bestowed. Ecstasy, that is the most cogent element in Modern Art. What better example of an abeyant, tempered ecstasy could be found than in MacDowell's "To a Wild Rose" or "To a Water-Lily". There are many free-verse poets today whose treatment of sex is similar to "Amores" but they are but the spasmodic, echoing afflatusses of the Simoon of psychoanalysis and are gradually degenerating into the cretin of *the conventional. "In art there are only revolutionists and plagiarists."*

Lawrence's style is the quality which accords him connotation. In the prevailing era of the "meticulous Paul Prys of psychology" novels too often read like the reports of coroner's inquests. Lawrence is not the cool, philosophically cynical observer, i. e., a Cabell or a Hardy. His psychology is not done in the manner of the professional psychiatrist, i. e., a Maugham. He is to be identified with his characters. He participates in their adventures. Their emotions are his emotions. His beautifully imaginative prose at times is whipped into a sea of nympholeptic froth of which the following, taken from his new intensely dramatic novel, "Women in Love", is an example:

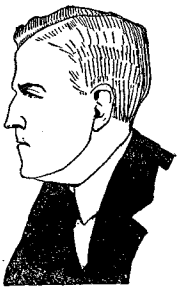
"The atmosphere was grey and translucent, the birds sang sharply on the young twigs, the earth would be quickening and hastening with growth. The two girls walked swiftly, gladly, because of the soft, subtle rush of morning that filled the wet haze. By the road the blackthorn was in blossom, white and wet, its tiny amber grains burning faintly in the white smoke of blossom. Purple twigs were darkly luminous in the grey air, high hedges glowed like living shadows hovering nearer, coming into creation. The morning was full of a new creation."

Surely this is an example of what W. L. George calls "the vividness of Mr. Lawrence's nature-vision". The daring infusion of extrinsic adjectives, beautiful phrases like "its tiny amber grains burning faintly in the white smoke of blossom", blend in a subtile, inferential efficacy. With the abandon of the hyper-æsthete, Lawrence leaves much to the receptiveness of his reader.

The plot of the novel is negligible. It wanders on aimlessly; characters are introduced and expatiate upon themselves in their conversation. Judging by their conversation, most of them are geniuses. All are rather mad, moving in a bemused state, in an intellectual lethargy. Through Rupert Birkin, who is the salient character of the novel, speaks Mr. Lawrence, and thence the sporadic gems of Schopenhauerian philosophy which are interpolated.

"Life is a blotch of labor, like insects scurrying in filth.... What is it but the worst and last forms of intellectualism, this love of yours for passion and the animal instincts.... What a gladness to think that whatever humanity did, it could not seize hold of the kingdom of death, to nullify that...."

Was there ever a novelist like Lawrence? Is there any one like him today? In the vast Karmas of the future there is no means of telling, but today he stands alone.



Five years ago, we met Meredith Nicholson at an undergraduate club in college. It was the first time we had ever encountered a "best seller" who could talk real literature or a "best seller" of any variety, we think. The other day we met him again. He hasn't changed in five years. He's the same genial, sane, normal American, with the same firm, broad, and liberal ideas. Just now he's planning to publish a new book of essays, and later there will be a novel, a novel that will deal seriously with some of the problems of American life. We drifted away from a discussion of books, for Mr. Nicholson is not the type who likes to discuss himself and his work ad lib., and found ourselves wondering about the marriage conditions for modern young people. Well, we talked for an hour and a half about that, and found no solution. There seems to be no question but that this problem, the economic side of it, is what is at the root of much of the unrest in the younger generation, an unrest which is not the eternal one, but something quite new and quite different. Perhaps it is that the very independent young man, and the increasingly independent young woman, haven't yet

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found a meeting ground on which to battle out their independence; and then, too, perhaps the high cost of marriage has something to do with it. At any rate, there are at least six novels to be written on the subject. Perhaps Mr. Nicholson will write one of them.

In the East Sixties of New York City, there is what might be called a play-shop. We have never felt so breathlessly conscious of the birth of plays as we did the other afternoon when we dropped in on Miss Zoe Akins, whose "Déclassée" and "Foot-Loose" were running together last year. On the table was a contract for a new play to star Emily Stevens; on the table was the freshly copied second act of a drama, fresh from the head of the playwright. She reached for it and read it to us. It was extremely entertaining. We almost laughed ourselves into the fire; but the arrival of tea averted a tragedy. Then, there was a play for Doris Keane—our head was quite fuddled by so many things at once. Miss Akins says that there are times when she doesn't write a thing. Then there are times when she writes several plays at the same time. Edward Sheldon has been collaborating with her on one of the last batch. It seems to us that of the many charming qualities which Miss Akins possesses, the most charming is her eagerness to help and to hear of new authors, artists, writers, actors, or what not. We will always be supremely grateful to her for a good turn she did us when we first came to New York and started in as a reporter. We believe that her new play "Greatness" is as original and sprightly as anything we have heard in a long time; but we are sorry that she doesn't write more poetry.

Frederic Arnold Kummer, the novelist, is a tall sober-faced individual who finds it difficult to keep away from writing musical comedy lyrics and stick to the more staid profession of writing books. Just now, however, he is working on a scheme for children's motion pictures. His ideas on this question seem to be constructive. Most movies designed for children, he says, are produced in exactly the same spirit as those for their elders. They are realistic stories of adventure, often of the blood and thunder variety. Mr. Kummer would put the fairy-story touch into them. He wants to translate something of the air of grotesque fantasy to the costumes, which are, we understand, to be designed by the man who worked out many of the children's scenes at the New York Hippodrome. It is his belief that these films, limited to two reels, will be accepted by the elders along with heavier drama, and that the children will find them more entertaining than the former attempts to please presented at greater length. May Massee, of the Chicago "Book-List", recently gave us an interesting idea. Whether or not she is going to carry it out in connection with her own Children's Bookshop we don't know; but we hope it will find interested followers in other cities. It seems to us that a combination bookshop, theatre, and recreation centre for children in the same building would do much to stimulate good reading and thinking. The films would not necessarily be juvenile; they might include dramatizations of standard books. Moreover, the person who arranged the programs for motion pictures would have an eye to the bookshop, and the books would be arranged in special exhibits to run along the lines of the day's program. Parents would be inspired to buy, children to read.

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